

Ulrich Middeldorf



*Ella Carter,
Christmas 1867,*



ROBA DI ROMA.

BY

WILLIAM W. STORY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE substance of a few of the earlier chapters of this book has already appeared in the "Atlantic Monthly." But these have been since re-written, enlarged, and, it is to be hoped, improved. The remainder, and far the greater part of the book, is now printed for the first time.

The title, "Roba di Roma," will be intelligible to every one who has been in Rome. Mr. Millhouse, in his dictionary, defines "Roba" to be "goods, wares, things, articles, property, chattels, estate; stuff, lumber; a robe, gown, dress." Yet this definition, extensive as it is, is inadequate. We have no term so comprehensive in English. "Roba" is everything—from rubbish and riff-raff to the most exquisite product of art and nature. This book is filled with "Roba,"—and I hope that it contains very little "Robaccia," which Mr. Millhouse defines to be "trash, trumpery, and stuff."

Nov. 1st, 1862.

PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.

IN the present edition, the chapters on "The Evil Eye" and "Saints and Superstitions" have been omitted, and several others, such as those on the Colosseum, the Aqueducts, and the Good Old Times, have been materially altered. This has been done in order to reduce the book to one volume, and to render it more portable for the traveller.*

I have expressly avoided the discussion of questions relating to politics and religion, not because I have not very strong opinions on them, but because my book has another scope, and I could do justice neither to myself nor to these subjects in treating them thus incidentally. My chief object has been to describe what is characteristic in the common life of Rome; but I have not felt thereby debarred from all subjects of a serious character, even though they should involve some slight historical sketches. The Ghetto, the Colosseum, and the Fountains, Aqueducts, and Baths, owe one of their great charms to associations with the past, and it would be difficult to give an account of them without touching upon matters of history and archæology. To

* This edition is out of print.

scholars, the information contained in these chapters is superfluous; but to the main portion of travellers it will not, I hope, be uninteresting; and it is for this reason that they have been retained, though all except that relating to the Ghetto have been much compressed and modified in form.

An author is not a good judge of his own work, and, to confess the truth, in making the deductions spoken of, I have felt much in the condition of the fabled miller and his ass; for whatever one has advised me to reject, another has, with equal urgency, desired me to retain. I should, however, be very ungrateful not to express my warm thanks for the kind spirit in which my book has been received. The generosity of the public has cheered me in the uninteresting work of revision, and induced me to spare no pains, which might render it more worthy of the favour already bestowed upon it.

A number of misprints occurred in the previous editions, which were necessarily incidental to the printing of foreign words and names. Those which I had no opportunity of revising and correcting, even in the second edition, I have now endeavoured carefully to set right. But I cannot hope that none will occur, since no book was ever without them. I only desire that they may not be put down to the ignorance of the author, as it is impossible for me personally, to revise the press.

One word, also, I wish to say, in regard to this book both in its present form and as it previously appeared. Nothing in it is at second-hand, unless so stated. The places, people, and scenes described, I have personally seen. The books that are or were quoted I have personally examined and read, always in so far as related to my subject, and generally throughout. It was far from my intention to parade a pretended erudition in citing books with which I happened to be familiar; but, to guard against any such

accusation, I have, in this edition, struck out nearly all the references in the notes.

At the same time that much has been omitted, some additions have been made relating to the customs and life of the common people in Rome, and these, I hope, will not be thought to be without interest.

W. W. STORY.

ROME, *Nov.* 1863.

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ROBA DI ROMA.

CHAPTER I.

ENTRANCE.



IT was on the 6th of December, 1856, that I landed with my family at Civita Vecchia, on my return for the third time to Rome. Before we could make all our arrangements, it was too late to think of journeying that day towards the dear old city ; but the following morning we set forth in a rumbling, yellow post-coach, with three horses, and a shabby, gaudy postilion,—the wheels clattering, the bells on the horses' necks jingling, the cocks'-plumes on their heads nodding, and a half-dozen sturdy beggar-brats running at our side and singing a dismal chorus of "*Dateci qualche cosa.*" Two or three half-baiocchi, however, bought them off, and we had the road to ourselves. The day was charming, the sky cloudless, the air tender and with that delicious odour of the South which so soothingly intoxicates the senses. The sea, accompanying us for half our way, gleamed and shook out its breaking surf along the shore ; and the rolling slopes of the Campagna, flattered by sunlight, stretched all around us, —here desert and sparkling with tall skeleton grasses and the dry canes' tufted feathers, and there covered with low, shrubby trees, that, crowding darkly together, climbed the

higher hills. On tongues of land, jutting out into the sea, stood at intervals lonely watch-towers, gray with age, and at their feet shallow and impotent waves gnashed into foam around the black, jagged teeth of half-sunken rocks along the shore. Here and there the broken arches of a Roman bridge, nearly buried in the lush growth of weeds, shrubs, and flowers, or the ruins of some old villa, the home of the owl, snake, and lizard, showed where Ancient Rome journeyed and lived. At intervals, heavy carts, drawn by the superb gray oxen for the Campagna, creaked slowly by, the *contadino* sitting athwart the tongue; or some light wine *carretta* came ringing along, the driver fast asleep under its tall, triangular cover, with his fierce little dog beside him, and his horse adorned with bright rosettes and feathers. Sometimes long lines of mules or horses, tied one to another's tail, plodded on in dusty procession, laden with sacks;—sometimes droves of oxen, or *poledri*, conducted by a sturdy driver, in heavy leathern leggings, and armed with a long, pointed pole, stopped our way for a moment. In the fields, the *pecoraro*, in shaggy sheepskin breeches, the very type of the mythic Pan, leaned against his staff, half-asleep, and tended his woolly flock,—or the *contadino* drove through dark furrows the old plough of Virgil's time, that figures in the vignettes to the "Georgics," dragged tediously along by four white oxen, yoked abreast. There, too, were herds of long-haired goats, rearing mid the bushes and showing their beards over them, or following the shepherd to their fold, as the shadows began to lengthen,—or rude and screaming wains, tugged by uncouth buffaloes, with low heads and knotted knees, bred among the malaria-stricken marshes.

Half-way to Rome we changed horses at Palo,—a little grim settlement, composed of a post-house, inn, stables, a line of straggling fishermen's huts, and a desolate old fortress, flanked by four towers. This fortress, which once belonged

to the Odescalchi family, but is now the property of the Roman government, looks like the very spot for a tragedy, as it stands there rotting in the pestilential air, and garrisoned by a few stray old soldiers, whose dreary, broken-down appearance is quite in keeping with the place. Palo itself is the site of the city of Alsium, founded by the Pelasgi, in the dim gloom of antiquity, long before the Etruscans landed on this shore. It was subsequently occupied by the Etruscans, and afterwards became a favourite resort of the Roman nobility, who built there the splendid villas of Antoninus, Porcina, Pompeius, and others. Of the Pelasgic and Etruscan town not a vestige remains; but the ruined foundations of Roman villas are still to be seen along the shore. No longer are to be found there the feasts described by Fronto,* of "fatted oysters, savoury apples, pastry, confectionary, and generous wines in faultless transparent goblets,"—nor would it now be called "a voluptuous seaside retreat;" but good lobsters are still abundant there, and one can get a greasy beefsteak, black bread, an ill-cooked chicken, and sour wine, at only about twice their market value. The situation is lovely, with a sea washing in along the rounded rim of the coast, close up to the door of the inn; and on a sunny day, when the white wings of feluccas may be seen gleaming far off on the blue Mediterranean, and the fishermen are drawing their nets close into shore, it seems as if it might really be made "a voluptuous seaside retreat," but for the desolating malaria which renders it dangerous to rest there for a single night.

Here, of course, we stopped as short a time as possible; and then, bidding adieu to the sea, struck inland over the Campagna to Rome. The country now grows wild, desolate, and lonely; but it has a special charm of its own, which they who are only hurrying on to Rome, and to whom

* *De Feriis Alsensibus*, Epist. III. See Dennis's *Etruscan Antiquities*, Vol. I.

it is an obstruction and a tediousness, cannot, of course, perceive. It is dreary, weird, ghostly,—the home of the winds; but its silence, sadness, and solitude are both soothing and impressive. After miles, and miles up and down, at last from the crest of a hill up which we slowly toiled with our lumbering carriage and reeking horses, we saw the dome of St. Peter's towering above the city, which as yet was buried out of sight. It was but a glimpse, and was soon lost. The postilion covered the worn-out lace of his shabby livery with a heavy cloak, which he flung over his shoulder to keep out the dampening air, gave a series of wild flourishes with his whip, broke into guttural explosions of voice to urge along his horses, and on we went full-gallop. The road grew more and more populated as we approached the city. Carriages were out for a drive, or to meet friends on their way from Civita Vecchia; and on foot was many a little company of Romans, laughing and talking. At the *osterias* were groups seated under *pergole*, or before the door, drinking *fogliette* of wine and watching the passers-by. At last, towards sundown, we stopped at the Porta Cavalleggieri, where, thanks to our *lascia passare*, we were detained but a minute,—and then we were in Rome. Over us hung the huge swelling dome of St. Peter's, golden with the last rays of sunset. The pillars of the gigantic colonnade of Bernini, as we jolted along, "seemed to be marching by," in broad platoons. The fountains piled their flexile columns of spray and waved them to and fro. The great bell clanged from the belfry. Groups wandered forth in the great Piazza. The old Egyptian obelisk in the centre pointed its lean finger to the sky. We were in Rome! This one moment of surprised sensation is worth the journey from Civita Vecchia. Entered by no other gate, is Rome so suddenly and completely possessed. Nowhere is the contrast so instantaneous and vivid as here, between the silent, desolate Campagna, and the splendour of St. Peter's, between the

burrows of primitive Christianity and the gorgeousness of ecclesiastical Rome.

After leaving the Piazza, we get a glimpse of Hadrian's Mole, and of the rusty Tiber, as it hurries, "*retortis littore Etrusco violenter undis*," as of old, under the statued bridge of St. Angelo,—and then we plunge into long, damp, narrow, dirty streets. Yet—shall I confess it?—they had a charm for me. Twilight was deepening into dark as we passed through them. Confused cries and loud Italian voices sounded about me. Children were screaming,—men howling their wares for sale. Bells were ringing everywhere. Priests, soldiers, *contadini*, and beggars thronged along. The *Trasteverini* were going home, with their jackets hanging over one shoulder. Women, in their rough woollen gowns, stood in the doorways bare-headed, or looked out from windows and balconies, their black hair shining under the lanterns. Lights were twinkling in the little cavernous shops, and under the Madonna shrines far within them. A funeral procession, with its black banners, gilt with a death's-head and cross-bones, was passing by, its wavering candles borne by the *confraternità*, who marched carelessly along, shrouded from head to foot in white, with only two holes for the eyes to glare through.

It was dirty, but it was Rome; and to any one who has long lived in Rome even its very dirt has a charm which the neatness of no other place ever had. All depends, of course, on what we call dirt. No one would defend the condition of some of the streets or some of the habits of the people. But the soil and stain which many call dirt I call colour, and the cleanliness of Amsterdam would ruin Rome for the artist. Thrift and exceeding cleanness are sadly at war with the picturesque. To whatever the hand of man builds the hand of Time adds a grace, and nothing is so prosaic as the rawly new. Fancy for a moment the difference for the worse, if all the grim, browned, rotted walls of Rome, with their peeling mortar, their thousand daubs of varying

grays and yellows, their jutting brickwork and patched stonework, from whose intervals the cement has crumbled off, their waving weeds and grasses and flowers, now sparsely fringing their top, now thickly protruding from their sides, or clinging and making a home in the clefts and crevices of decay, were to be smoothed to a complete level, and white-washed over into one uniform and monotonous tint. What a gain in cleanliness! what a loss in beauty! An old wall like this I remember on the road from Grotta Ferrata to Frascati, which was to my eyes a constant delight. One day the owner took it into his head to whitewash it all over—to clean it, as some would say. I look upon that man as little better than a Vandal in taste,—one from whom “knowledge at one entrance” was “quite shut out.”

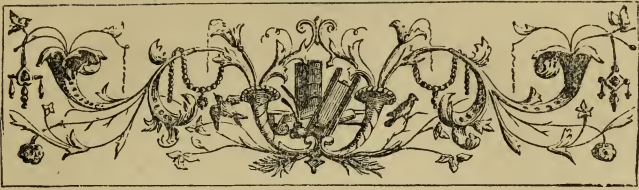
Take another “modern instance.” Substitute for the tiled roofs of Rome, now so gray, tumbled, and picturesque with their myriad lichens, the cold, clean slate of New York, or the glittering zinc of Paris,—should we gain or lose? The Rue de Rivoli is long, white, and uniform,—all new and all clean; but there is no more harmony and melody in it than in the “damnable iteration” of a single note; and even Time will be puzzled to make it as picturesque, or half as interesting as those old houses destroyed in the back streets for its building, and which had sprouted up here and there, according to the various whims of the various builders. Those were taken down because they were dirty, narrow, unsightly. These are thought elegant and clean. Clean they certainly are; and they have one other peculiarity,—that of being as monotonously regular as the military despotism they represent. But I prefer individuality, freedom, and variety, for my own part. The narrow, uneven, huddled Corso, with here a noble palace, and there a quaint passage, archway, or shop,—the buildings now high, now low, but all barnacled over with balconies,—is far more interesting than the unmeaning uniformity of the Rue de Rivoli. So, too,

there are those among us who have the bad taste to think it a desecration in Louis Napoleon to have scraped the stained and venerable Nôtre Dame into cleanliness. The Romantic will not consort with the Monotonous,—Nature is not neat,—Poetry is not formal,—and Rome is not clean.

These thoughts, or ghosts of thoughts, flitted through my mind, as the carriage was passing along the narrow, dirty streets, and brought with them after-trains of reflection. There may be, I thought, among the thousands of travellers that annually winter at Rome, some to whom the common out-door pictures of modern Roman life would have a charm as special as the galleries and antiquities, and to whom a sketch of many things, which wise and serious travellers have passed by as unworthy their notice, might be interesting. Every ruin has had its score of *immortelles* hung upon it. The soil has been almost overworked by antiquarians and scholars, to whom the modern flower was nothing, but the antique brick a prize. Poets and sentimentalists have described to death what the antiquarians have left;—some have done their work so well that nothing remains to be done after them. Everybody has an herbarium of dried flowers from all the celebrated sites, and a table made from bits of marble collected in the ruined villas. Every Englishman carries a Murray for information and a Byron for sentiment, and finds out by them what he is to know and feel at every step. Pictures and statues have been staled by copy and description, until everything is stereotyped, from the Dying Gladiator, with his “young barbarians all at play,” and all that, down to the Beatrice Cenci, the Madame Tonson of the shops, that haunts one everywhere, with her white turban and red eyes. All the public and private life and history of the ancient Romans, from Romulus to Constantine and Julian the Apostle (as he is sometimes called) is perfectly well known. But the common life of the modern Romans, the games, customs, and habits of the

people, the every-day of To-day, has been only touched upon here and there,—sometimes with spirit and accuracy, as by Charles M'Farlane, sometimes with grace, as by Hans Christian Andersen, and sometimes with great ignorance, as by Jones, Brown, and Robinson, who see through the eyes of their courier, and the spectacles of their prejudices. This is the subject, however, which has specially interested me; and a life of several years in Rome has enabled me to observe some things which do not strike the hurried traveller, and to correct many of my own false notions in regard to the people and place. To a stranger, a first impression is apt to be a false impression; and it constantly happens to me to hear my own countrymen work out the falsest conclusions from the slightest premises, and settle the character and deserts of the Italians,—all of whom they mass together in a lump,—after they have been just long enough on the soil to travel from Civita Vecchia to Rome under the charge of a courier,—when they know just enough of the language to ask for a coachman when they want a spoon,—or to order a “*mezzo detto*” at the *restaurant*,—and when they have made the respectable acquaintance, besides their courier, of a few porters, a few beggars, a few shopkeepers, and the *padrone* of the apartment they hire.

No one lives long in Rome without loving it; and I must, in the beginning, confess myself to be in the same category. Those who shall read these slender papers, without agreeing to the kindly opinions often expressed, must account for it by remembering that “Love lends a precious seeing to the eye.” My aim is far from ambitious. I shall not be erudite, but I hope I shall not be dull. These little sketches may remind some of happy days spent under the Roman sky, and by directing the attention of others to what they have overlooked, may open a door to a new pleasure. *Chi sa?* The plainest Ranz des Vaches may sometimes please when the fifth symphony of Beethoven would be a bore.



CHAPTER II.

STREET MUSIC IN ROME.



HOEVER has passed the month of December in Rome will remember to have been awakened from his morning-dreams by the gay notes of the *pifferari* playing in the streets below, before the shrines of the Madonna and Bambino,—and the strains of one set of performers will scarcely have ceased, before the distant notes of another set of pilgrims will be heard to continue the well-known *novena*. The *pifferari* are generally *contadini* of the Abruzzi Mountains, who, at the season of Advent, leave their home to make a pilgrimage to Rome,—stopping before all the wayside shrines as they journey along, to pay their glad music of welcome to the Virgin and the coming Messiah. Their song is called a *novena*, from its being sung for nine consecutive days,—first, for nine days previous to the Festa of the Madonna, which occurs on the 8th of December, and afterwards for the nine days preceding Christmas. The same words and music serve, however, for both celebrations. The *pifferari* always go in couples, one playing on the *zampogna*, or bagpipe, the bass and treble accompaniment, and the other on the *piffero*, or pastoral pipe, which carries the air; and for the month before Christmas the sound of their instruments resounds through the streets of Rome, wherever there is a shrine,—whether at the corners of the streets, in the depths of the

shops, down little lanes, in the centre of the Corso, in the interior courts of the palaces, or on the stairways of private houses.

Their costume is extremely picturesque. On their heads they wear conical felt hats, adorned with a frayed peacock's feather, or a faded band of red cords and tassels,—their bodies are clad in red waistcoats, blue jackets, and small-clothes of skin or yellowish homespun cloth,—skin sandals are bound to their feet with cords that interlace each other up the leg as far as the knee,—and over all is worn a long brown or blue cloak with a short cape, buckled closely round the neck. Sometimes, but rarely, this cloak is of a deep red with a scalloped cape. As they stand before the pictures of the Madonna, their hats placed on the ground before them, and their thick, black, dishevelled hair covering their sunburnt brows, blowing away on their instruments or pausing to sing their *novena*, they form a picture which every artist desires to paint. Their dress is common to nearly all the peasantry of the Abruzzi, and, worn and tattered as it often is, it has a richness and harmony of tint which no new clothes could ever have, and for which the costumes of the shops and regular models offer a poor substitute. It is the old story again. The new and clean is not so paintable, not so picturesque, as the tarnished and soiled. The worn blue of the cloak is softened by the dull gray of the threads beneath,—patches of various colours are often let into the jacket or breeches,—the hat is lustreless from age, and rusty as an old wall,—and the first vivid red of the waistcoat is toned by constant use to a purely pictorial hue. Besides, the true *pifferaro* wears his costume as if it belonged to him and had always been worn by him,—so that it has none of that got-up look which spoils everything. From the sandals and corded leggings, which, in the Neapolitan dialect, are termed *ciocce*, the *pifferari* are often called *ciociari*.

Their Christmas pilgrimages are by no means prompted by purely religious motives, though, undoubtedly, such considerations have some weight with them, the common peasantry being religiously inclined, and often making pilgrimages simply from a sense of duty and propriety. But in these wanderings to Rome, their principal object is to earn a little money to support them during the winter months, when their "occupation is gone." As they are hired in Rome by the owners of the various houses adorned with a Madonna shrine (of which there are over fifteen hundred in the city) to play before them at the rate of a paul or so for each full *novena*, and as they can easily play before thirty or forty a day, they often return, if their luck be good, with a tolerable little sum in their pockets. Besides this, they often stand as models, if they are good-looking fellows, and thus add to their store; and then, again, the *forestieri* (for, as the ancient Romans called strangers *barbari*, so their descendants call them *foresters*, wood-men, wild-men) occasionally drop *baiocchi* and pauls into their hats still further to increase it.

Sometimes it is a father and son who play together, but oftener two old friends who make the pilgrimage in pairs. This morning, as I was going out for a walk round the walls, two admirable specimens of the *pifferari* were performing the *novena* before a shrine at the corner of the street. The player of the bagpipe was an old man, with a sad, but very amiable face, who droned out the bass and treble in a most earnest and deprecatory manner. He looked as if he had stood still, tending his sheep, nearly all his life, until the peace and quiet of Nature had sunk into his being, or, if you will, until he had become assimilated to the animals he tended. The other, who played the pipe, was a man of middle age, stout, vigorous, with a forest of tangled black hair, and dark quick eyes that were fixed steadily on the Virgin, while he blew and vexed the little brown pipe with

rapid runs and nervous *floriture*, until great drops of sweat dripped from its round open mouth. Sometimes, when he could not play fast enough to satisfy his eagerness, he ran his finger up and down the vents. Then, suddenly lowering his instrument, he would scream, in a strong peasant-voice, verse after verse of the *novena*, to the accompaniment of the bagpipe. One was like a slow old Italian *vettura* all lumbered with luggage, and held back by its drag; the other panting and nervous at his work as an American locomotive, and as constantly running off the rails. Both, however, were very earnest at their occupation. As they stood there playing, a little group gathered round. A scamp of a boy left his sport to come and beat time with a stick on the stone step before them; several children clustered near; and two or three women, with black-eyed infants in their arms, also paused to listen and sympathize. At last the playing ceased. The *pifferari* took up their hats and looked smilingly round at us.

“Where do you come from?” I asked.

“*Eh!*” said the *pifferaro*, showing all his teeth, and shrugging his shoulders good-naturedly, while the other echoed the pantomime. “*Dal Regno*,”—for so the Abruzzi peasants call the kingdom of Naples.

“And do you come every year?”

“*Sì, Signore*. He (indicating his friend) and I (pointing to himself) have been companions for thirty-three years, and every year we have come to Rome to play the *novena*.”

To this the old *zampognaro* bent his head on one side, and said, assentingly,—“*Eh! per trenta tre anni*——”

And “*Ecco*,” continued the *pifferaro*, bursting in before the *zampognaro* could go on, and pointing to two stalwart youths of about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, who at this moment came up the street with their instruments,—“These are our two sons. He is mine,”—indi-

cating one with his reversed thumb ; “and that other is his,” —jerking his head towards his companion. “And they, too, are going to play in company, as we do.”

“For thirty-three years more, let us hope,” said I.

“*Eh! speriamo*” (Let us hope so), was the answer of the *pifferaro*, as he showed all his teeth in the broadest of smiles. Then, with a motion of his hand he set both the young men going, he himself joining in, straining out his cheeks, blowing all the breath of his body into the little pipe, and running up and down the vents with a sliding finger, until finally he brought up against a high, shrill note, to which he gave the full force of his lungs, and after holding it in loud blast for a moment, startled us by breaking off, without gradation, into a silence as sudden as if the music had snapped short off like a pipe-stem.

On further conversation with my *ciociari*, I found that they came yearly from Sora, a town in the Abruzzi, about fifty miles from Rome, making the journey on foot, and picking up by the way whatever trifle of copper they could. In this manner they travelled the whole distance in five days, living upon onions, lettuce, oil, and black bread. They were now singing the second *novena* for *Natale*; and, if one could judge from their manner and conversation, were quite content with what they had earned. I invited them up into my room, and there in the pleasantest way they stunned us with the noise of both their instruments, to the great delight of the children and the astonishment of the servants, for whom these common things had worn out their charm by constant repetition. At my request they repeated the words of the *novena* they had been singing, and I took them down from their lips. After eliminating the wonderful *m-ms* of the Neapolitan dialect, in which all the words lay imbedded like shells in the sand, and supplying some of the curious elisions with which those Abruzzi Procrustean recklessly cut away the polysyllables,

so as to bring them within the rhythmic compass, they ran thus:—

“Tu Verginella figlia di Sant’ Anna,
Che in ventre tuo portasti il buon Gesù;
E lo partoristi sotto la capanna,
E dov’ mangiav’no lo bue e l’ asinello.

“Quel Angelo gridava: ‘Venite, Santi!
'Ch’ è andato Gesù dentro la capanna;
Ma guardate Vergine beata,
Che in ciel in terra sia nostr’ avvocata!’

“San Giuseppe andava in compagnia,
Si trovò al partorir di Maria.
La notte di Natale è notte santa—
Il Padre e l’ Figliuolo e lo Spirito Santo.
'Sta la ragione che abbiamo cantato;
Sia a Gesù bambino rappresentato.”

The sudden introduction of “*Quel Angelo*” in this song reminds us of a similar felicity in the romantic ballad of “Lord Bateman,” where we are surprised to learn that “*this Turk*,” to whom no allusion had been previously made, “has one lovely daughter.”

The air to which this is sung is very simple and sweet, though monotonous, and if for no other reason is interesting as being one of the oldest fragments of popular song existing in Italy. Between the verses, a curious little *ritornello* is played, and at the close of the last verse, there is a strange and solemn adagio.*

The wanderings of the *pifferari* are by no means confined to the Roman States. Sometimes they stray “as far away as Paris is,” and, wandering about in that gay capital, like children at a fair, play in the streets for chance *sous*, or stand as models to artists, who, having once been in Rome, hear with a longing Rome-sickness the old characteristic sounds of the *piffero* and *zampogna*. Two of them I remember to have heard thus, as I was at work in my studio

* The music of this song will be found in the Appendix.

in Paris; and so vividly did they recall the Old Roman time, that I called them in for a chat. Wonderful was their speech. In the few months of their wandering, they had put into their Neapolitan dough various plums of French words, which, pronounced in their odd way, “suffered a change into something rich and strange.” One of them told me that his wife had just written to him by the hand of a public letter-writer, lamenting his absence, and praying him to send her his portrait. He had accordingly sent her a photograph in half-length. Some time afterwards she acknowledged the receipt of it, but indignantly remonstrated with him for sending her a picture of a “*mezz’ uomo, che pareva guardando per la finestra*” (a half-man, who seemed to be looking out of the window), as she oddly characterized a half-length, and praying to have his legs also in the next portrait. This same fellow, with his dull, amiable face, played the rôle of a ferocious wounded brigand dragged into concealment by his wife, in the studio of a friend next door; but despite the savagery and danger of his counterfeited position, he was sure to be overpowered by sleep before he had been in it more than five minutes,—and if the artist’s eye left him for a moment, he never failed to change his attitude for one more fitted to his own somnolent propensities than for the picture.

Every shopkeeper among the lower classes in Rome hires these *pifferari* to play before the little shrine behind his counter, or over his door, thinking thereby to procure the favour of the Madonna, without which his business is sure not to prosper. Padre Bresciani relates that in the year 1849, he heard a stout Roman woman (*un gran’ pezzo di donna*) invoking a curse upon some of the *birbanti* then abroad in the city, after this manner,—“*Eh! Madonna Santissima, mandate un accidente a ’sti birboni.*” “Send an apoplexy to those rascals, most holy Madonna.”

“But, Sora Agnese,” remonstrated the padre, “you must

not invoke such curses upon anybody. You should forgive even wicked persons if you love the Madonna."

"If I love the Madonna!" was the reply. "*Figuratevi, sor compare mio*—just imagine whether I love her, when every year I hire the *pifferari* to play the *novena* to her!"

But the Roman *pifferari* cannot really be heard to advantage in the streets of Rome. In the mountains their pipe and bagpipe produce a wholly different impression, and I remember to have heard them once towards sundown at San Germano, when the effect was charming.

Just before reaching the town, the road passes within a stone's throw of the ancient amphitheatre built by Umidia Quadratilla, and mentioned by Pliny. Here we ordered the carriage to stop, and running through the furrows of a ploughed field ascended the slope of the hill on which it stands. Though ruined in parts it is a noble structure; the exterior walls of reticulated work are still in good condition, and its main front is tolerably perfect. Time has tinged its marble facings with a rich yellow hue, but has failed to eat out the cement or to shake the solid courses of its stones. Here and there shrubs, flowers, and one or two fig-trees have found a footing and grace its walls. Climbing through one of the round arches of entrance which is half choked with rubbish, we found ourselves within the enclosure: the interior is far more ruined than the exterior; the seats are all crumbled away and obliterated, and Indian corn, beans and potatoes, were growing in the arena. As we stood looking in silence upon this sad decay, we heard in the distance the pipe and bagpipe of some shepherds playing a melancholy pastoral tune. Nothing could be more charming;—more perfectly in rhyme with the mountains and the ruins. I could scarcely have believed such tones could come from a bagpipe. Softened by the distance, they lost all their nasal drawl, and stole sweetly to our ears with that special charm which the rudest native music has when heard

in its native place. Looking through the archway over the distant valley and mountains, we listened to them enchanted.

The *pifferari* are by no means the only street-musicians in Rome, though they take the city by storm at Christmas. Every day under my window comes a band of four or five, who play airs and concerted pieces from the operas,—and a precious work they make of it sometimes! Not only do the instruments go very badly together, but the parts they play are not arranged for them. A violone grunts out a low accompaniment to a vinegar-sharp violin which saws out the air, while a trumpet blares in at intervals to endeavour to unite the two, and a flute does what it can, but not what it would. Sometimes, instead of a violone, a hoarse trombone, with a violent cold in the head, snorts out the bass impatiently, gets ludicrously uncontrollable and boastful at times, and is always so choleric, that, instead of waiting for the *cadenzas* to finish, it bursts in, knocks them over as by a blow on the head, roars away on false intervals, and overwhelms every other voice with its own noisy vociferation. The harmonic arrangements are very odd. Each instrument seems to consider itself ill-treated when reduced to an accompaniment or bass, and is constantly endeavouring, however unfitted for it, to get possession of the air,—the melody being, for all Italians, the principal object. The violin, however, weak of voice as it is, always carries the day, and the other instruments steal discontentedly back to their secondary places, the snuffy old violone keeping up a constant growl at its ill-luck, and the trombone now and then leaping out like a tiger on its prey.

Far better and more characteristic are the ballad-singers, who generally go in couples,—an old man, dim of sight, perhaps blind, who plays the violin, and his wife or daughter, who has a guitar, tamborello, or at times a mandolin. Sometimes a little girl accompanies them, sings with them, and

carries round a tin box, or the tamborello, to collect *baiocchi*. They sing long ballads to popular melodies, some of which are very pretty and gay, and for a *baiocco* they sell a sheet containing the printed words of the song. Sometimes it is in the form of a dialogue,—either a love-making, a quarrel, a reconciliation, or a leave-taking,—each singer taking an alternate verse. Sometimes it is a story with a chorus, or a religious conversation-ballad, or a story of a saint, or from the Bible. Those drawn from the Bible are generally very curious paraphrases of the original simple text, turned into the simplest and commonest idioms of the people;—one of them may be found in the Appendix to Goethe's "Italienische Reise." These Roman ballads and popular songs, so far as I am able to learn, have never been collected.* Many of them do not exist in print, and are only traditional and caught from mouth to mouth. This is particularly the case with those in the Romanesque dialect, which are replete with the peculiar wit and spirit of the country. But the memory of man is too perilous a repository for such interesting material; and it is greatly to be wished that some clever Italian, who is fitted for the task, would interest himself to collect them and give them a permanent place in the literature of his language.

But to return to our ballad-singers, whom we have left in the middle of their song, and who are now finishing. A crowd has gathered round them, as usual; out of the windows and from the balconies lean the occupants of the houses near by, and the *baiocchi* thrown by them ring on the pavement below. With rather stentorian voices they have been singing a dialogue which is most elaborately entitled a "Canzonetta Nuova, sopra un marinaio che da l' addio alla sua promessa sposa mentre egli deve partire per la via di Levante. Sdegno, pace, e matrimonio delli medesimi

* Since the first edition was published, a little collection of Roman Ritornelle has been made.

con intercalare sull' aria moderna. Rime di Francesco Calzaroni"—(A new song about a mariner, who says good-bye to his betrothed, he being on the point of leaving her to go to the East. Indignation, peace, and marriage of the same, with various parts, arranged in a modern air). I give my *baiocco*, and receive in return a smiling "*Grazie*" and a copy of the song, which is adorned by a woodcut of a ship in full sail.

The titles of these ballads are generally very characteristic; one or two of them I will here copy, to give an idea of the subjects of which they treat. Here, for instance, is "The Marriage by Concourse, where a tailor, a barber, a mason, a shoemaker, a carpenter, a locksmith, and a cook are the suitors;" and here another, which treats of "The Repentance of Young Men after they have taken Wives;" and one called a "New Song upon a quarrel between a Mistress and her Servant, whom she dismisses from her service because she spends too much money every day;" and one entitled "The Blind Little Peasant, who complains of the wrongs he has suffered from Menica, and abandons her to marry another;" and here is "a most beautiful composition upon an old woman who wishes to dress *alla moda*." Here is another of a moral character, containing the sad history of Frederick the Gambler, who, to judge from the woodcut accompanying the Canzonetta, must have been a ferocious fellow. He stands with his legs wide apart, in half-armor, a great sash tied over his shoulder and swinging round his legs, an immense sword at his side, and a great hat with two ostrich feathers on his head, looking the very type of a "swashing blade."

The singers of longer ballads carry about with them sometimes a series of rudely-executed illustrations of different incidents in the story, painted in distemper and pasted on a large pasteboard frame, which is hung against a wall or on a stand planted behind the singer in the ground. These he

pauses now and then in his song to explain to the audience, and they are sure to draw a crowd.

Every night during the spring, and sometimes during the clear evenings of winter, around the Piazza Barberini may be heard the sound of the guitar playing in accompaniment to a mandoline, as the performers march up and down the streets or stop before the little *osterias*; and as summer comes on, and the evenings grow warm, begin the street serenades,—sometimes like that of Lindoro in the opening of the “*Barbiere di Sevilla*,” but generally with only one voice, accompanied by the same instruments. These serenades are, for the most part, given by a lover or friend to his *innamorata*, and the words are expressive of the tender passion; but there are also *serenate di gelosia*, or satirical serenades, when the most impertinent and stinging verses are sung. Long before arriving, the serenaders may be heard marching up the street to the thrum of their instruments. They then place themselves before the windows of the fair one, and, surrounded by a group of men and boys, make proclamation of their love in loud and often violent tones. It seems sometimes as if they considered the best method of expressing the intensity of their passion was by the volume of their voice. Certainly, in these cases, the light of love is not hidden under a bushel, for these serenaders shout out their songs in stentorian tones, that pierce the silent air of night, and echo through the deserted streets. But though the voices are harsh, and the music rude and wild, the words of some of these serenades are very pretty and graceful, and particularly those that go by the name of “*Sospiri d' amore* :”—

“*Vorrei che la finestra omai s'aprissi,
Vorrei che lo mio bene s'affacciasse,
E un sospiro d' amore lo gradisse.*”

In the mountain towns the *contadini* know by heart hundreds of little songlets, which they shout under the windows

of their *sposine* and lady-loves. Most of them consist of few lines, and all are variations upon the same theme. The stout *contadina* is a queen, a noble lady, a flower of beauty, a delicate creature, who deprives her lover of rest, and he comes to kiss the ground she has trod upon, and awakens the street with his lamenting, and prays her to come to the window and smile upon him. Love transfigures the world, and the peasant uses the noblest language. He sings:—

“Rizzatevi dal letto e uscite fuori,
Venite a vedè il cielo quanto è bello;
Il vostro viso al lume della luna
Par d’ un angiolo fatto col penello.

“Oh Rosa delle rose, o Rosa bella,
Per te non dormo ne notte ne giorno,
E sempre penso alla tua faccia bella,
Alle grazie che hai faccio ritorno.
Faccio ritorno alle grazie che hai;
Ch’ io ti lasci, amor mio, non creder mai.

“Miralo il cielo e mira quante stelle,
E mira quanti nodi in quella rete;
Son più le pene mie che non son chelle,
Son più le pene mie che dato m’ete,
Son più le pene mie ch’ è tuoi martiri;
Io ti amo di buon cuore e tu t’ adiri.

“Ti vengo a visitare, alma regina,
Ti vengo a visitare alla tu’ casa;
Inginocchioni per tutta la via,
Bacio la terra andù che sei passata:
Bacio la terra, e risguardo le mura,
Dove se’ passa, nobil creatura.
Bacio la terra, e risguardo la tetta
Dove passate, nobil giovanetta.

“Vada la voce mia dentro le mura,
Di poi che vita mia non può passare.
Persona bella, delicata e pura,
Da dove siete, statemi ad ascoltare;
Statemi ad ascoltar, persona cara,
Per mia consolazione guardo l’ aria;
Statemi ad ascoltar, persona pura,
Per mia consolazion guardo le mura.”

In the fulness of his feelings the lover invokes blessings, not only upon his mistress, but also on the house and all the family :—

“In questa casa non ci ho più cantato;
Vo’ domandar l’usanza che ci sia.
Se c’è del bene, Dio ce lo mantenga!
Se c’è del male, Dio lo mandi via!
Vo’ benedir quella rosa incarnata,
E lo padrone e tutta la brigata;
Vo’ benedir quella rosa vermiglia,
E lo padrone e tutta la famiglia.”

Sometimes, when his mistress lives far away in another town, he arrives late at night, and sings until the morning breaks, the bells ring, and the windows begin to open : then he sings,—Farewell :—

“La vedo l’ alba che vuole apparire,
Chiedo licenza, e non vo’ piu cantare,
Chè le finestre si vedono aprire
E le campane si sentono sonare.
E si sente sonare in cielo e in terra;
Addio, bel gelsomin, ragazza bella.
E si sente sonare in cielo e in Roma,
Addio, bel gelsomin, bella persona.”*

* These serenades will all be found in the “Canti Popolari Toscani,” collected by Giuseppe Tigri.

Note.—It is impossible in any translation to give the graceful terms of expression which characterise these little songs—English is not the language of love, and wants the endearing diminutives of the Italian—but those who do not understand the original will find in these versions the sense, if not the grace, of these verses:—

“Rise from your bed, come out into the night;
Come, see the sky, so beautiful and bright;
In the soft splendour of the moon your face is
Like to an angel’s, that an artist traces.

“Dear Rose of roses, Rose of loveliest grace,
For thee I cannot sleep by night or day,
And always thinking on thy happy face
And all thy charms, I cannot keep away—
Always returning thy sweet face to see,—
Nor dream, dear love, that I can ever flee.

Among the Trasteverini, particularly, these serenades are common. Some of them are very clever in their improvisa-

“Look at the stars that sparkle in the skies!
Behold the knots that in this net are wove!
My griefs are more than all those starry eyes,
More than those knots that you have made by love!
But though my pains are more than yours can be,—
Loving with all my heart—you turn from me.

“I come, dear maid, to visit your abode—
I come to see you, and to sing my song—
And kneeling all the way along the road,
I kiss the ground where you have passed along;
I kiss the ground and gaze upon the wall
Where you have passed, oh! noblest maid of all!
I kiss the ground, and gaze upon the eaves
Whose roof, oh, noble maid, your form receives!

“Go! voice of mine, these walls to penetrate,
Since where thou art, my love, I cannot go.
Oh, maiden lovely, pure and delicate,
From where you lie, listen to me below!
List to my song, oh, dearest and most fair!
Who to console me, gaze into the air!
List to my song, oh, purest one of all,
Who to console me, gaze at this blank wall.

“Within this house I never sang before,—
I wish the friendship of the house to pray;
If there be good—God keep it evermore!
If there be ill—God drive the ill away!
I wish that fair and blushing rose to bless,
And bring the house and master happiness.
Oh, crimson rose! my blessing rest on thee,
And on the master and his family!

“I see the dawn which now begins to break,
I take my leave and will no longer sing,
The windows open and the world's awake,
And everywhere the bells begin to ring.
In earth and heaven I hear them ringing clear.
Farewell, sweet jasmine, lovely maid and dear;
In heaven and Rome I hear them ring and knell,
Farewell, fair maid, beloved one, farewell!”

tions and imitations of different dialects, particularly of the Neapolitan, in which there are so many charming songs. Their skill in improvisation, however, is not generally displayed in their serenades, but in the *osterias*, during the evenings of the *festas* in summer. There it is that their quickness and epigrammatic turn of expression are best seen. Two disputants will, when in good humour and warmed with wine, string off verse after verse at each other's expense, full of point and fun,—the guitar burring along in the intervals, and a chorus of laughter saluting every good hit.

It is not uncommon for those who like to study Roman manners and humours, and eat truly Roman dishes, to make up a little party and dine at the Palombella, or some other *osteria con cucina* in the Trastevere. There, however, if you would get a taste of the real spirit of the Romans, you should go incognito, and take your place at the tables in the common room, and pass if you can for one of them, or at least not for a looker-on or a listener. One other thing also is essential, and that is, that you should understand their language well; and then, if you are lucky, you will be rewarded for your pains by hearing capital songs and improvisations.

One lucky night I shall never forget, when we made a little party of artists and poets, and dined together in a little *osteria* not far from the Piazza Barberini. Peppo, the Neapolitan cook, gave us an excellent dinner, wonderful macaroni and capital wine, and while we ate and drank, a guitar and mandoline in the adjoining room made a low accompaniment to our talk. We went in our worst coats and most crumpled hats, tried to attract as little attention as possible, and sat at a table in the corner. The rest of the company was composed solely of working men, several of whom were carters, who came in after their hard day's work to take a temperate supper in their shirt-sleeves. Yet

even in "best society" you will not find simpler or better manners, at once removed from servility and defiance. They soon saw that we were not of their class, but their behaviour to us was perfect—all the staring was done by us. They accepted courteously our offers to drink with them, and offered us of their wine in return. Then they talked and jested, and played at Passatello with inimitable good-humour, while old Zia Nica, the padrona of the establishment, sat in the middle of the shabby old pot-house, looking with sharp wild eyes out from under a gray fell of tumbled hair—now shrieking out her orders, now exchanging with the new comers keen jokes that flashed like knives, and were received by tumultuous applause. As our dinner drew to a close we had in the mandoline and guitar, and all the opera tunes were played with great cleverness. Was there ever a better mandoline?—how it tingled and quivered as it nervously rang out the air, with its stinging vibrations and tense silvery shakes, while the soft woolly throb of the guitar kept up a constant accompaniment below! The old cobwebs on the dusky, soiled, and smoky beams of the ceiling, where the colours of old frescoes were still to be seen, shook to the music, and the flame of the little onion-shaped light before the coarsely-painted engraving of the Madonna seemed to wink in sympathy. Old Zia Nica herself grew excited when a spirited Tarantella was played. She had danced it when young in Naples. "*Che bella cosa!* and I could dance it now," she cried.—"Brava, Zia Nica!—give us a Tarantella," was the cry all round. "*Eh! Perche nò?*"—and up she stood and shook her long fell of hair, and laughed a wild laugh, and showed her yellow teeth, and up and down the old *osteria* she shuffled and tramped, flinging up her hands and snapping her fingers, and panting and screaming, till at last with a whoop she fell down into her chair, planted her two hands akimbo on her knees, glared at the company, and cried out,

“Old Zia Nica’s not dead yet. *Nò, Signori!* The old woman is not so old but that she can dance a Tarantella still—*grazie a Dio—nò, Signori-i-i-i.*”

Scarcely was this performance finished when the glass door jingled at the entrance of a little middle-aged fellow who had come across the street for a *fiasco* of wine. He was received with a shout of welcome. “Give us a toast in rhyme,” cried one. “Bravo! give us a toast in rhyme,” echoed all; and spinning round on his feet with a quick, eager face, and flinging out his hands with nervous gesticulation, he suddenly, in a high voice, poured out a volley of humorous rhymes upon one after another of his friends, then launched a *brindisi* at us, and—hey, presto, change!—was out of the door in a minute, the sharp bell jingling as he closed it, and a peal of laughter pursuing him. So being in the humour, we called for some improvisation, and the mandoline and guitar began an air and accompaniment in *ottava rima*. After a minute or two, one of the men at the head of the table opposite broke out in a loud voice, and sang, or rather chanted a strophe; and scarcely had the instruments finished the little *ritornello*, when another answered him in a second strophe; to this he responded, and so alternately for some time the improvisation went on without a break. Then suddenly rose from the opposite end a third person, a carter, who poured out two or three strophes without stopping; and after him still another carter broke in. So that we had four persons improvising in alternation. This lasted a full half-hour, and during the whole time there was not a pause or hesitation. The language used was uncommonly good, and the ideas were of a character you would little have anticipated from such a company. The theme was art, and love, and poetry, and music, and some of the recitation was original and spirited. Out of Italy could anything like this be seen? But the sound of music and song had reached the ears of the police,

and those of their white-barred figures and chapeaux appeared at the door, and, despite all our prayers, they stopped the improvisation. This broke up the fun, and it was then proposed that we should go to the Colosseum in two carriages with the music. No sooner said than done. Off ran Antonio for the carriages, and in a few minutes we were on our way, through the Corso and down through the Forum, the mandoline and guitar playing all the way.

Such a night would be incomplete without a serenade; for the mandoline and guitar were made for such uses. So we stopped under the windows of one fair lady, and though our voices were loud, I fear they never reached her, as she happened not to be within a dozen or more miles of us.

In many of the back streets and squares of the city, fountains jet out of lions' heads into great oblong stone cisterns, often sufficiently large to accommodate some thirty washerwomen at once. Here the common people resort to wash their clothes, and with great laughter and merriment amuse themselves while at their work by improvising verses, sometimes with rhyme, sometimes without, at the expense of each other, or perhaps of the passer-by,—particularly if he happen to be a gaping *forestiere*, to whom their language is unintelligible. They stand on an elevated stone step, so as to bring the cistern about mid-height of their body, and on the rough inclined bevel of its rim they slash and roll the clothes, or, opening them, flaunt them into the water, or gather them together, lifting their arms high above their heads, and always treating them with a violence which nothing but the coarsest material can resist. The air to which they chant their couplets is almost always a *Campana* melody. Sharp attacks are given, and as sharp *répliques* received, in exceeding good humour; and when there is little wit there is sure to be much laughter. The salt is oftentimes pretty coarse, but it gives a relish to the talk.

A remarkable trait among the Italians is the good-nature with which they take personal jokes, and their callousness to ridicule of personal defects. Jests which would provoke a blow from an Anglo-Saxon, or wound and rankle in the memory for life, are here taken in good part. A cripple often joins in the laugh at his own deformity; and the rough carelessness with which such personal misfortunes are alluded to is amazing to us of a more sensitive organization. I well remember the extreme difficulty I once had in breaking an Italian servant of the habit of announcing an acquaintance, whose foreign name he could not pronounce, and who had the misfortune to be hump-backed, as "*quel gobbo*" (that hunchback). He could not understand why he should not call him a *gobbo* if he was a *gobbo*; and in spite of all I could do, he would often open the door and say, "*Signore, quel gobbo desidera farle una visita*" (that hunchback wishes to make you a visit), when "*quel gobbo*" was right on his heels.

The Italians are also singularly free from that intense self-consciousness which runs in our English blood, and is the root of shyness, awkwardness, and affectation. Unconsciousness is the secret of grace, freedom, and simplicity. We never forget ourselves. The Italians always forget themselves. They are sometimes proud, very seldom vain, and never affected. The converse peculiarity follows, of course: having no self-consciousness, they are as little sensitive to their defects as vain of their charms. The models who come to the studios, and who have been selected for their beauty, despite the silent flattery incident to their very profession, and the lavish praise they constantly hear expressed, are always simple, natural, and unaffected. If you tell them they are very beautiful, they say, "*Ma che?*" deprecatorily, or perhaps admit the fact. But they are better pleased to have their dress admired than their faces. Of the former they are vain, of the latter they are not. For

the most part, I think they rather wonder what it is we admire in them, and think worthy of perpetuating in stone or colour.

But to return to our washerwomen. In every country-town a large washing-cistern is always provided by the authorities for public use; and at all hours of the day, the picturesque figures of the peasants of every age, from the old hag, whose skin, once smooth and blooming, is now like a brown and crumpled palimpsest (where Anacreontic verses are overwritten by a dull monkish sermon), to the round, dark-eyed girl, with broad, straight back and shining hair, may be seen gathered around it,—their heads protected from the sun by their folded *tovaglie*, their skirts knotted up behind, and their waists embraced by stiff, red boddices. Their work is always enlivened by song,—and when their clothes are all washed, the basket is lifted to the head, and home they march, stalwart and majestic, like Roman caryatides. The sharp Italian sun shining on their dark faces and vivid costumes, or flashing into the fountain, and basking on the gray, weed-covered walls, makes a picture which is often enchanting in its colour. At the Emissary by Albano, where the waters from the lake are emptied into a huge cistern through the old conduit built by the ancient Romans to sink the level of the lake, I have watched by the hour together these strange pictorial groups, as they sang and thrashed the clothes they were engaged in washing; while over them, in the foreground, the tall gray tower and granary, once a castle, lifted itself in strong light and shade against the peerless blue sky and rolling hills beyond, covered with the pale-green foliage of rounded olives, formed the characteristic background. Sometimes a peasant, mounted on the crupper of his donkey, would pause in the sun to chat awhile with the women. The children, meanwhile, sprawled and played upon the grass, and the song and chat at the fountain would not unfrequently be inter-

rupted by a shrill scream from one of the mothers, to stop a quarrel, or to silence a cry which showed the stoutness of their little lungs.

The cobblers of Rome are also a gay and singing set. They do not imprison themselves in a dark cage of a shop, but sit "*sub Jove*," where they may enjoy the life of the street and all the "skyey influences." Their benches are generally placed near the *portone* of some palace, so that they may draw them under shelter when it rains. Here all day they sit and draw their waxed-ends and sing,—a row of battered-looking boots and shoes ranged along on the ground beside them, and waiting for their turn, being their only stock-in-trade. They commonly have enough to do, and as they pay nothing for shop-rent, every *baiocco* they get is nearly clear profit. They are generally as poor as Job's cat; but they are far happier than the proprietor of that interesting animal. Figaro is a high ideal of this class, and about as much like them as Raffaello's angels are like James Yellowplush. What the cobblers and Figaro have in common is song and a love of scandal. One admirable specimen of this class sits at the corner of the Via Felice and Capo le Case, with his bench backed against the gray wall. He is an oldish man, with a long gray beard and a quizzical face,—a sort of Hans Sachs, who turns all his life into verse and song. When he comes out in the morning he chants a domestic idyl, in which he narrates in verse the events of his household, and the differences and agreements of himself and his wife, whom I take to be a pure invention. This over, he changes into song everything and every person that passes before him. Nothing that is odd, fantastic, or absurd escapes him, or fails to be chronicled and sarcastically commented on in his verse. So he sits all day long, his mind like a kaleidoscope, changing all the odd bits of character which chance may show him into rhythmic forms, and chirps and sings as perpetually as the cricket.

Friends he has without number, who stop before his bench—from which he administers poetical justice to all persons—to have a long chat, or sometimes to bring him a friendly token; and from the dark interior of his drawer he often brings forth an orange, a bunch of grapes, or a handful of chestnuts, supplied by them, as a desert for the thick cabbage-soup which he eats at mid-day.

In the busiest street of Rome, the pure Campagna song may often be heard from the throat of some peasant, as he slowly rumbles along in his loaded wine-cart,—the little dog at his side barking a sympathetic chorus. This song is rude enough, and seems in measure founded upon the Church chant. It is in the minor key, and consists ordinarily of two phrases, ending in a screaming monotone, prolonged until the breath of the singer fails, and often running down at the close into a blurred chromatic. No sooner is one strain ended than it is suddenly taken up again in *prestissimo* time, and “slowed” down to the same dismal conclusion. Heard near, it is deafening and disagreeable. But when refined by distance, it has a sad and pleasant effect, and seems to belong to the place,—the long wail at the close being the very type of the melancholy stretches of the Campagna. In the same way I have frequently thought that the *Jodeln* of the Swiss was an imitation of the echo of the mountains, each note repeated first in octave, or fifth, and then in its third below. The Campagna song is to be heard not only in the Campagna, but everywhere in the country,—in the vineyards, in the grain-fields, in mountain and valley, from companies working together, and from solitary *contadini*,—wherever the influence and sentiment of the Roman Campagna is felt. The moment we get into Tuscany, on the one side, or over into Naples, on the other, it begins to be lost. It was only the other day, at nightfall, that I was sauntering out on the desolate Campagna towards Civita Vecchia. The shadows were deepening and the mists be-

ginning to creep whitely along the deep hollows. Everything was dreary and melancholy enough. As I paused to listen to the solitude, I heard the grind of a distant invisible cart, and the sound of a distant voice singing. Slowly the cart came up over the crest of the hill, a dark spot against the twilight sky, and mounted on the top of a load of brushwood sat a *contadino*, who was singing to himself these words,—not very consolatory, perhaps, but so completely in harmony with the scene and the time that they struck me forcibly :—

“E, bella, tu non piangerà-a-a-i,
Sul giorno ch’ io sarò mor-or-or-to-o-o-o-o-o.”*

Not only at night and to celebrate their love do the Italian peasants sing,—they sing at their work and at their play. All the long summer days, standing in the breast-high corn, or beating with heavy spade the soil, or plucking clusters of purple grapes, they shriek out their ballads and songs in stentorian tones that may be heard for a mile. During the harvesting seasons they gather together at night, and lying under the light of the moon upon their threshing-floors, sing in chorus their simple melodies. And in the long winter evenings, sitting round the smouldering embers of their fires, they “rouse the night-owls” at their *veglie*, or beat time to their constantly interrupted song with the clattering of their looms. The city also sings as well as the country. The carpenter as he drives his plane; the blacksmith as he wields his hammer, and strikes from the sputtering iron its fiery constellations; the cobbler as he pounds the soles of old shoes; the mason as he lays his bricks; the rougher-out as the chips of ringing marble fly under the steel point of his chisel; the maid of all-work as she draws water in the court-yard—all solace themselves with song. As the crowd stream back from the theatre, towards mid-

* “And, dearest, you will never weep for me-e-e-e,
The day when I shall be no mo-o-o-ore.”

night, you hear them shouting the airs of the opera they have just been listening to ; and oftentimes, on festa nights, in the “sma’ hours ayont the twal,” the prolonged screaming song of the peasants rouses you from your first slumbers as it sounds through the echoing streets. Since the revolution in 1848 Rome has been stricken with a morose silence ;—but in the brilliant days when Pius IX. first came to the Papal chair the city rang with glad, patriotic songs ; and every evening bands of young men met in the Piazza or wandered through the Corso singing in chorus. The moment the Italians are contented they sing, and there is no clearer proof of their present discontent than the comparative silence of the streets in these latter days.

Whether this constant habit of song among the Southern people, while at their work, indicates happiness and content, I will not undertake to say ; but it is pleasanter in effect than the sad silence in which we Anglo-Saxons perform our tasks,—and it seems to show a less harassed and anxious spirit. But I feel quite sure that these people are more easily pleased, contented with less, less morose, and less envious of the ranks above them, than we are. They give little thought to the differences of caste, have little ambition to make fortunes or rise out of their condition, and are satisfied with the commonest fare, if they can get enough of it. The demon of dissatisfaction never harries them. When you speak to them, they answer with a smile which is nowhere else to be found. The nation is old, but the people are children in disposition. Their character is like their climate, generally sunny,—subject to violent occasional storms, but never growling life away in an uncomfortable drizzle of discontent. They live upon Nature,—sympathize with it and love it,—are susceptible to the least touch of beauty,—are ardent, if not enduring in their affections,—and, unless provoked and irritated, are very peaceful and amiable. The flaw in their nature is jealousy ;

and it is a great flaw. Their want of truth is the result of their education. We who are of the more active and busy nations despise them for not having that irritated discontent which urges us forward to change our condition; and we think our ambition better than their supineness. But there is good in both. We do more,—they enjoy more; we make violent efforts to be happy,—invent, create, labour, to arrive at that quiet enjoyment which they own without struggle, and which our anxious strife unfits us to enjoy when the means for it are obtained. The general, popular idea, that an Italian is quarrelsome and ill-tempered, and that the best are only bandits in disguise, is quite a mistake; and when studied as they exist out of the track of travel, where they are often debased and denaturalized, they will be found to be simple, kind-hearted, and generous.



CHAPTER III.

BEGGARS IN ROME.

DIRECTLY above the Piazza di Spagna, and opposite to the Via de' Condotti, rise the double towers of the Trinità de' Monti. The ascent to them is over one hundred and thirty-five steps, planned with considerable skill, so as to mask the steepness of the Pincian, and forming the chief feature of the Piazza. Various landings and dividing-walls break up their monotony; and a red granite obelisk, found in the gardens of Sallust, crowns the upper terrace in front of the church. All day long these steps are flooded with sunshine, in which, stretched at length, or gathered in picturesque groups, models of every age and both sexes bask away the hours when they are free from employment in the studios. Here, in a rusty old coat, and long white beard and hair, is the *Padre Eterno*, so called from his constantly standing as model for the First Person of the Trinity in religious pictures. Here is the ferocious bandit, with his thick black beard and conical hat, now off duty, and sitting with his legs wide apart, munching in alternate bites an onion, which he holds in one hand, and a lump of bread, which he holds in the other. Here is the *contadina*, who spends her studio life in praying at a shrine with upcast eyes, or lifting to the Virgin her little sick child,—or carrying a perpetual copper vase to the fountain,—or receiving imaginary

bouquets at a Barmecide Carnival. Here is the invariable pilgrim, with his scallop-shell, who has been journeying to St. Peter's and reposing by the way near aqueducts or broken columns so long that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, and who is now fast asleep on his back, with his hat pulled over his eyes. When strangers come along, the little ones run up and thrust out their hands for *baiocchi*; and so pretty are they, with their large, black, lustrous eyes, and their quaint, gay dresses, that a new comer always finds something in his pocket for them. Sometimes a group of artists, passing by, will pause and steadily examine one of these models, turn him about, pose him, point out his defects and excellences, give him a *baiocco*, and pass on. It is, in fact, a model's exchange.*

All this is on the lower steps, close to the Piazza di Spagna; but as one ascends to the last platform, before reaching the upper piazza in front of the Trinità de' Monti, a curious squat figure, with two withered and crumpled legs, spread out at right angles and clothed in long blue stockings, comes shuffling along on his knees and hands, which are protected by clogs. As it approaches, it turns suddenly up from its quadrupedal position, takes off its hat, shows a broad, stout, legless *torso*, with a vigorous chest and a ruddy face, as of a person who has come half-way up from below the steps through a trap-door, and with a smile, whose breadth is equalled only by the cunning which lurks round the corners of the eyes, says, in the blandest and most patronizing tones, with a rising inflection, "*Buon giorno, Signore! Oggi fa bel tempo,*" or "*fa cattivo tempo,*" as the case may be. This is no less a person than Beppo, King of the Beggars, and Baron of the Scale di Spagna. He is

* Of late years the government have prohibited the models, for I know not what reason, from gathering upon these steps; and they now congregate at the corner of the Via Sistina and Capo le Case, near the Pizzicheria, from which they supply themselves with groceries.

better known to travellers than the Belvedere Torso of Hercules, at the Vatican, and has all the advantage over that wonderful work of having an admirable head and a good digestion. Hans Christian Andersen has celebrated him in "The Improvisatore," and unfairly attributed to him an infamous character and life; but this account is purely fictitious, and is neither *vero* nor *ben trovato*. Beppo, like other distinguished personages, is not without a history. The Romans say of him, "*Era un Signore in paese suo*,"—"He was a gentleman in his own country,"—and this belief is borne out by a certain courtesy and style in his bearing which would not shame the first gentlemen in the land. He was undoubtedly of a good family in the provinces, and came to Rome, while yet young, to seek his fortune. His crippled condition cut him off from any active employment, and he adopted the profession of a mendicant, as being the most lucrative and requiring the least exertion. Remembering Belisarius, he probably thought it not beneath his own dignity to ask for an *obolus*. Should he be above doing what a great general had done? However this may be, he certainly became a mendicant, after changing his name,—and, steadily pursuing this profession for more than a quarter of a century, by dint of his fair words, his bland smiles, and his constant "*Fa buon tempo*," and "*Fa cattivo tempo*," which, together with his withered legs, were his sole stock in starting, he has finally amassed a very respectable little fortune. He is now about fifty-five years of age, has a wife and several children, and, a few years ago, on the marriage of a daughter to a very respectable tradesman, he was able to give her what was considered in Rome a very respectable dowry. The other day a friend of mine met a tradesman of his acquaintance running up the Spanish steps.

"Where are you going in such haste?" he inquired.

"To my banker."

“To your banker? but what banker is there above the steps?”

“Only Beppo,” was the grave answer. “I want sixty *scudi*, and he can lend them to me without difficulty.”

“Really?”

“Of course. *Come vi pare?*” said the other, as he went on to his banker.

Beppo hires his bank—which is the upper platform of the steps—of the government, at a small rent *per annum*; and woe to any poor devil of his profession who dares to invade his premises! Hither, every fair day, at about noon, he comes mounted on his donkey, and accompanied by his valet, a little boy, who, though not lame exactly, wears a couple of crutches as a sort of livery,—and as soon as twilight begins to thicken and the sun is gone he closes his bank (it is purely a bank of deposit), crawls up the steps, mounts a stone post, and there majestically waits for his valet to bring the donkey. But he no more solicits deposits. His day is done; his bank is closed; and from his post he looks around, with a patronizing superiority, upon the poorer members of his profession, who are soliciting, with small success, the various passers-by, as a king smiles down upon his subjects. The donkey being brought, he shuffles on to its crupper, and makes a joyous and triumphant passage down through the streets of the city to his home. The bland business smile is gone. The wheedling subserviency of the day is over. The cunning eye opens largely. He is calm, dignified, and self-possessed. He mentions no more the state of the weather. “What’s Hecuba to him,” at this free moment of his return? It is the large style in which all this is done that convinces me that Beppo was a “*Signor in paese suo*.” He has a bank, and so had Sir Francis Baring. What of that? He is a gentleman still. The robber knights and barons demanded toll of those who passed their castles, with violence and threats, and at the

bloody point of their swords. Whoso passes Beppo's castle is prayed in courtesy to leave a remembrance, and receives the blandest bow and thanks in return. Shall we then say the former are nobles and gentlemen,—the other is a miserable beggar? Is it worse to ask than to seize? Is it meaner to thank than to threaten? If he who is supported by the public is a beggar, our kings are beggars, our pensions are charity. Did not the Princess Royal hold out her hand the other day to the House of Commons? and does any one think the worse of her for it? We are all, in measure, beggars; but Beppo, in the large style of kings and robber-barons, asks for his *baiocco*, and, like the merchant-princes, keeps his bank. I see dukes and noble guards in shining helmets, spurs, and gigantic boots, ride daily through the streets on horseback, and hurry to their palaces; but Beppo, erectly mounted on his donkey, in his short jacket (for he disdains the tailored skirts of a fashionable coat, though at times over his broad shoulders a great blue cloak is grandly thrown, after the manner of the ancient emperors), is far more impressive, far more princely, as he slowly and majestically moves at nightfall towards his august abode. The shadows close around him as he passes along; salutations greet him from the damp shops; and darkness at last swallows up for a time the great square *torso* of the "King of the Beggars."

Such is Beppo as he appears on the public 'change. His private life is involved somewhat in obscurity; but glimpses have been had of him which indicate a grand spirit of hospitality and condescension, not unworthy of the best days of his ancestors, the Barons of the Middle Ages. Innominato a short time since was passing late at night along the district of the Monti, when his attention was drawn by an unusual noise and merrymaking in one of its mean little *osterie* or *bettole*. The door was ajar, and peeping in he beheld a gallant company of roysterers of the same profession as

Beppo, with porters, and gentlemen celebrated for lifting in other ways. They were gathered round a table, drinking merrily, and mounted in the centre of the table, with his withered legs crooked under him, sat Baron Beppo, the high priest of the festive rites. It was his banquet, and he had been strictly scriptural in his invitations to all classes from the street. He was the Amphitryon who defrayed the cost of the wine, and acknowledged with a smile and a cheerful word the toasts of his guests; and, when Innominato saw him, he was as "glorious" as Tam o' Shanter. He was not under the table, simply because he was on it; and he had not lost his equilibrium, solely because he rested upon so broad a base. Planted like an oak, his legs figuring the roots, there he sat, while the jolly band of beggars and rascals were "rousing the night-owl with a catch," and the blood of the vine was freely flowing in their cups. The conversation was very idiomatic and gay, if not aristocratic, and Beppo's tongue wagged with the best. It was a most cheering spectacle. The old Barons used to sit above the salt, but Baron Beppo sat higher yet—or rather, he reminded one of classic days, as, mounted there like a Bacchic Torso, he presided over the noisy rout of Silenus.

Since the previous edition of this book was published Beppo has fallen into disgrace. His breakfast had perhaps disagreed with him, perhaps he had "roused the night-owl" too late on the previous night, and perhaps his nerves were irritated by a bad *sciocco*; but certain it is, that one unfortunate morning an English lady, to whom he applied for *qualche cosa*, made some jocosely-intended answer, to the effect that he was as rich as she, and alluded, as it is said, to the dowry he had given his daughter—whereupon it became suddenly "*cattivo giorno*" with Beppo, and he suffered himself to threaten her, and even, as some accounts go, to throw stones; and the lady having reported him to the authorities, Beppo went into forced retirement for a time.

I was made aware of this one day by finding his bank occupied by a new figure and face. Astonished at the audacity of this interloper, I stopped and said—"And Beppo, where is *he*?" The jolly beggar then informed me, in a very high and rather exulting voice (I am sorry to say), beginning with a sharp and prolonged eh—e-e-e-h, that the police had laid violent hands on Beppo, because he had maltreated an English lady, and that he ought to have known better, but *come si fa*; and that for the present he was at San Michele.

Beppo having repented, and it is to be hoped amended during his sojourn in that holy hospice, has now again made his appearance in the world. But during his absence the government has passed a new and salutary law, by which beggars are forbidden publicly to practise their profession, except upon the steps of the churches. There they may sit and extend their hand, and ask charity from those who are going to their prayers, but they may no longer annoy the public, and specially strangers in the street. Beppo, therefore, keeps no more his bank on the steps of the Piazza di Spagna, but has removed it to those of the church of St. Agostino, where, at least for the present, he is open to the "receipt of custom."

Begging, in Rome, is as much a profession as praying and shop-keeping. Happy is he who is born deformed, with a withered limb, or to whom Fortune sends the present of a hideous accident or malady; it is a stock to set up trade upon. St. Vitus's dance is worth its hundreds of *scudi* annually; epileptic fits are also a prize; and a distorted leg and hare-lip have a considerable market value. Thenceforth the creature who has the luck to have them is absolved from labour. He stands or lies in the sun, or wanders through the Piazza, and sings his whining, lamentable strophe of, "*Signore, povero stroppiato, datemi qualche cosa per amor di Dio!*"—and when the *baiocco* falls into his hat,

like ripe fruit from the tree of the stranger, he chants the antistrophe, "*Dio la benedica, la Madonna e tutti i santi!*"* No refusal but one does he recognize as final,—and that is given, not by word of mouth, but by elevating the forefinger of the right hand, and slowly wagging it to and fro. When this finger goes up he resigns all hope, as those who pass the gate of the Inferno, replaces his hat and lapses into silence, or turns away to some new group of sunny-haired foreigners. The recipe to avoid beggars is, to be black-haired, to wear a full beard, to smoke in the streets, speak only Italian, and shake the forefinger of the right hand when besieged for charity. Let it not be supposed from this that the Romans give nothing to the beggars, but pass them by on the other side. This is quite a mistake. On the contrary, they give more than the foreigners; and the poorest class, out of their little, will always find something to drop into their hats for charity.

The ingenuity which the beggars sometimes display in asking for alms is often humoristic and satirical. Many a woman on the cold side of thirty is wheedled out of a *baiocco* by being addressed as *Signorina*. Many a half-suppressed exclamation of admiration, or a prefix of *Bella*, softens the hearts of those to whom compliments on their beauty come rarely. A great many *baiocchi* are also caught from green travellers of the middle class, by the titles which are lavishly squandered by these poor fellows. *Illustrissimo*, *Eccellenza*, *Altezza*, will sometimes open the purse, when plain "*Mosshoo*" will not.

The profession of a beggar is by no means an unprofitable one. A great many drops finally make a stream. The cost of living is almost nothing to them, and they frequently lay up money enough to make themselves very comfortable in their old age. A Roman friend of mine, Conte C.,

* "Signore, a poor cripple; give me something, for the love of God!"
—"May God bless you, the Madonna, and all the saints!"

speaking of them one day, told me this illustrative anecdote :—

“I had occasion,” he said, “a few years ago to reduce my family” (the servants are called, in Rome, the family), “and having no need of the services of one under-servant, named Pietro, I dismissed him. About a year after, as I was returning to my house towards nightfall, I was solicited by a beggar, who whiningly asked me for charity. There was something in the voice which struck me as familiar, and, turning round to examine the man more closely, I found it was my old servant, Pietro. ‘Is that you, Pietro?’ I said; ‘you,—begging here in the streets! what has brought you to this wretched trade?’ He gave me, however, no very clear account of himself, and evidently desired to avoid me when he recognized who I was. But, shocked to find him in so pitiable a condition, I pressed my questions, and finally told him I could not bear to see any one who had been in my household reduced to beggary; and though I had no actual need of his services, yet, rather than see him thus, he might return to his old position as servant in my house, and be paid the same wages as he had before. He hesitated, was much embarrassed, and, after a pause, said—‘A thousand thanks, your Excellency, for your kindness; but I cannot accept your proposal, because,—to tell you the truth,—I make more money by this trade of begging.’”

But though the beggars often lay by considerable sums of money, so that they might, if they chose, live with a certain degree of comfort, yet they cannot leave off the habit of begging after having indulged in it for many years. They get to be avaricious, and cannot bring their minds to spend the money they have. The other day, an old beggar, who used to frequent the steps of the Gesù, when about to die, ordered the hem of her garment to be ripped up, saying that there was money in it. In fact, about a thousand *scudi* were found there, three hundred of which she ordered to be

laid out upon her funeral, and the remainder to be appropriated to masses for her soul. This was accordingly done, and her squalid life ended in a pompous procession to the grave.

The great holidays of the beggars are the country *festas*. Thronging out of the city, they spread along the highways, and drag, drive, roll, shuffle, hobble, as they can, towards the festive little town. Everywhere along the road they are to be met,—perched on a rock, seated on a bank, squatted beneath a wall or hedge, and screaming, with outstretched hand, from the moment a carriage comes in sight until it is utterly passed by. As one approaches the town where the *fiesta* is held, they grow thicker and thicker. They crop up along the road like toadstools. They hold up every hideous kind of withered arm, distorted leg, and unsightly stump. They glare at you out of horrible eyes, that look like cranberries. You are requested to look at horrors, all without a name, and too terrible to be seen. All their accomplishments are also brought out. They fall into improvised fits; they shake with sudden palsies; and all the while keep up a chorus, half-whine, half-scream, which suffers you to listen to nothing else. It is hopeless to attempt to buy them all off, for they are legion in number, and to pay one doubles the chorus of the others. The clever scamps, too, show the utmost skill in selecting their places of attack. Wherever there is a sudden rise in the road, or any obstacle which will reduce the gait of the horses to a walk, there is sure to be a beggar. But do not imagine that he relies on his own powers of scream and hideousness alone,—not he! He has a friend, an ambassador, to recommend him to your notice, and to expatiate on his misfortunes. Though he himself can scarcely move, his friend, who is often a little ragged boy or girl, light of weight, and made for a chase, pursues the carriage and prolongs the whine, repeating, with a mechanical iteration, “*Signore! Signore! datemi qualche cosa,*

Signore !" until his legs, breath, and resolution give out at last ; or, what is still commoner, your patience is wearied out or your sympathy touched, and you are glad to purchase the blessing of silence for the small sum of a *baiocco*. When his whining fails, he tries to amuse you ; and often resorts to the oddest freaks to attract your notice. Sometimes the little rascal flings himself heels over head into the dust, and executes somersets without number, as if they had some hidden influence on the sentiment of compassion. Then, running by the side of the carriage, he will play upon his lips with both hands, making a rattling noise, to excite your curiosity. If you laugh, you are lost, and he knows it. But if you sternly resist all his entreaties, it sometimes happens, if you have given him a hard run, that, despite his broken wind and tired legs, he will send after you a peculiar blessing in the shape of an "apoplexy," and throw a stone at your carriage, merely for luck, of course, as in other countries a shoe is thrown.

As you reach the gates of the town the row becomes furious. There are scores of beggars on either side the road, screaming in chorus. No matter how far the town be from the city, there is not a wretched, maimed cripple of your acquaintance, not one of the old stumps who have dodged you round a Roman corner, not a ragged baron who has levied toll for passage through the public squares, a privileged robber who has shut up for you a pleasant street or waylaid you at an interesting church, but he is sure to be there. How they got there is as inexplicable as how the apples got into the dumplings in Peter Pindar's poem. But at the first ring of a *festa*-bell they start up from underground (those who are legless getting only half-way up), like Rhoderick Dhu's men, and level their crutches at you as the others did their arrows. An English lady, a short time since, after wintering at Rome, went to take the baths of Lucca in the summer. On going out for a walk, on the

first morning after her arrival, whom should she meet but King Beppo, whom she had just left in Rome! He had come with the rest of the nobility for recreation and bathing, and of course had brought his profession with him.

Owing to a great variety of causes, the number of beggars in Rome is very large. They grow here as noxious weeds in a hot-bed. The government neither favours commerce nor stimulates industry. Its policy is averse to change of any kind, even though it be for the development of its own resources or of the energies of the people. The church is Brahmanic, contemplating only its own navel. Its influence is specially restrictive in Rome, because it is also the State there. It restrains not only trade, but education; it conserves ancient ideas and usages; it prefers not to grow, and looks with abhorrence upon change.

This restrictive policy of the Church makes itself felt everywhere, high and low; and by long habit the people have become indolent and supine. The splendid robes of ecclesiastical Rome have a draggled fringe of beggary and vice. What a change there might be, if the energies of the Italians, instead of rotting in idleness, could have a free scope! Industry is the only purification of a nation; and as the fertile and luxuriant Campagna stagnates into malaria, because of its want of ventilation and movement, so does this grand and noble people. The government makes what use it can, however, of the classes it *exploits* by its system; but things go in a vicious circle. The people, kept at a stand-still, become idle and poor; idleness and poverty engender vice and crime; crime fills the prisons; and the prisons afford a body of cheap slaves to the government.

To-day, as I am writing, some hundreds of *forçats*, in their striped brown uniforms, are tugging at their winches and ropes to drag the column of the Immaculate Virgin to its pedestal on the Piazza di Spagna. By the same system of compulsory labour, the government, despite its limited

financial resources, is enabled to carry out public projects which, with well-paid workmen, would be too expensive to be feasible. In this manner, for instance, for an incredibly small sum, was built the magnificent viaduct which spans with its triple tier of arches the beautiful Val di L'Arricia. But, for my own part, I cannot look upon this system as being other than very bad, in every respect. And when, examining into the prisons themselves, I find that the support of these poor criminal slaves is farmed out by the government to some responsible person at the lowest rate that is offered, generally for some ten *baiocchi* apiece *per diem*, and often reformed by him at a still lower rate, until the poor wretches are reduced to the very minimum of necessary food as to quantity and quality, I confess that I cannot look with pleasure on the noble viaduct at L'Arricia, or the costly column to the Immaculate Virgin, erected by the labour of their hands.

Within a few years the government seemed to become conscious of the great number of beggars in Rome, and of the reproach they offered to the wise and paternal regulations of the priestcraft. Accordingly, for a short time, they carried on a move in the right direction, which had been begun by the Triumvirate of 1849, during their short career. Some hundreds of the beggars were hired at the rate of a few *baiocchi* a day to carry on excavations in the Forum and in the Baths of Caracalla. The selection was most appropriate. Only the old, decrepit, and broken-down were taken,—the younger and sturdier were left. Ruined men were in harmony with the ruined temples. Such a set of labourers was never before seen. Falstaff's ragged regiment was a joke to them. Each had a wheelbarrow, a spade, or pick, and a cloak; but the last was the most important part of their equipment. Some of them picked at the earth with a gravity that was equalled only by the feebleness of the effort and the poverty of the result. Three strokes so

wearied them that they were forced to pause and gather strength, while others carried away the ant-hills which the first dug up. It seemed an endless task to fill the wheelbarrows. Fill, did I say? They were never filled. After a bucketful of earth had been slowly shovelled in, the labourer paused, laid down his spade carefully on the little heap, sighed profoundly, looked as if to receive congratulations on his enormous success, then flinging, with a grand sweep, the tattered old cloak over his left shoulder, lifted his wheelbarrow-shafts with dignity, and marched slowly and measuredly forward towards the heap of deposit, as Belisarius might have moved at a funeral in the intervals of asking for *oboli*. But reduced gentlemen, who have been accustomed to carry round the hat as an occupation, always have a certain air of condescension when they work for pay, and, by their dignity of deportment, make you sensible of their former superior state. Occasionally, in case a *forestiere* was near, the older, idler, and more gentlemanlike profession would be resumed for a moment (as by parenthesis), and if without success, a sadder dignity would be seen in the subsequent march. Very properly, for persons who had been reduced from beggary to work, they seemed to be anxious both for their health and their appearance in public, and accordingly a vast deal more time was spent in the arrangement of the cloak than in any other part of the business. It was grand in effect, to see these figures, encumbered in their heavy draperies, guiding their wheelbarrows through the great arches of Caracalla's Baths, or along the Via Sacra; and determined to show, that in despite of fortune they were still the *gens togata*.

It would, however, be a grievous mistake to suppose that all the beggars in the streets of Rome are Romans. In point of fact, the greater number are strangers, who congregate in Rome during the winter from every quarter. Naples sends them in by thousands. Every little country town of

the Abruzzi Mountains yields its contribution. From north, south, east, and west, they flock here as to a centre where good pickings may be had of the crumbs that fall from the rich men's tables. In the summer season they return to their homes with their earnings, and not one in five of those who haunted the churches and streets in the winter is to be seen in June.

It is but justice to the Roman government to say that its charities are very large. If, on the one hand, it does not encourage commerce and industry, on the other, it liberally provides for the poor. In proportion to its means, no government does more, if so much. Every church has its poor-box (*Cassa dei Poveri*). Numerous societies, such as the *Sacconi*, and other confraternities, employ themselves in accumulating contributions for the relief of the poor and wretched. Well-endowed hospitals exist for the care of the sick and unfortunate; and there are various establishments for the charge and education of poor orphans. A few figures will show how ample are these charities. The revenue of these institutions is no less than eight hundred and forty thousand *scudi* annually, of which three hundred thousand are contributed by the Papal treasury, forty thousand of which are a tax upon the Lottery. The hospitals, altogether, accommodate about four thousand patients, the average number annually received amounting to about twelve thousand; and the foundling hospitals alone are capable of receiving upwards of three thousand children annually. Besides the hospitals for the sick, there is also a hospital for poor convalescents at Sta. Trinità dei Pellegrini, a lunatic asylum containing about four hundred patients, one for incurables at San Giacomo, a lying-in hospital at San Rocco, and a hospital of education and industry at San Michele. There are also thirteen societies for bestowing dowries on poor young girls on their marriage; and from the public purse, for the same object, are expended every

year no less than thirty-two thousand *scudi*. In addition to these charities are the sums collected and administered by the various confraternities, as well as the sum of one hundred and seventy-two thousand *scudi* distributed to the poor by the commission of subsidies. But though so much money is thus expended, it cannot be said that it is well administered. The proportion of deaths at the hospitals is very large; and among the foundlings, it amounted, between the years 1829 and 1833, to no less than seventy-two *per cent*.

Despite the enormous sums expended in charity, there is much poverty and suffering among the lower classes in Rome. No one certainly need ever die of hunger, if he be willing to live on public charity. But a natural pride prevents many from availing themselves of this; and there is a large class, which barely struggles along, enduring great privations, living in the most miserable manner, and glad in any way to earn an honest penny. The beggars are by no means the greatest sufferers, though, Heaven knows, many of them are wretched enough. These poor classes live generally on the ground-floor, gregariously crowded into damp and unwholesome rooms. You may peep into their dark and dismal caves as you pass along the street. The broken and uneven floors are paved with brick and clammy with moisture, the walls damp and stained with great blotches of saltpetre, the rafters of the ceilings brown with age and smoke, the furniture shabby, rickety, and consisting of a rude chest of drawers, a few broken-down chairs, a table, and a large high bed of corn-leaves, mounted upon trestles, which stands in the corner, and covered with a white quilt. Yet no place is so mean as to be without its tawdry picture of the Madonna, and out of the smallest means a sum is squeezed enough to feed with oil the slender, crusted wick of the onion-shaped lamp, which sheds upon it a thick, dull, yellow point of feeble flame. In the winter these rooms are cold, unwholesome, rheumatic, and reek with

moisture. There in the rainy season the old women crouch over their little earthenware pot of coals (*scaldino*), warming their shrivelled, veiny hands, or place it under their dress to warm their ill-fed bodies. Yet despite their poverty and sufferings they are not a complaining people, and there is something touching in their resignation, their constant reference to the Madonna, and their invariable refrain of "*Pazienza*." If you give them a *baiocco* they are very grateful, and at once pray to the Madonna to bless you, for it is she who has prompted the gift, and she who will reward it. Yet the climate is kindly, and the weeks of cold and rain are few, and when the sun shines and the air is mild you will see them all sitting outside their doors in the street, which is their saloon, chatting gaily, screaming across to their neighbour's, and sometimes bursting into wild *Campana* songs. Some of them earn a slender pittance by keeping a little stall of roasted chestnuts, and apples, and pine-cones, over which at times is spread a coarse canvas supported by three or four poles, sometimes to keep the wind off and sometimes to shelter them from the sun. Not all however can afford this luxury—one must be rather up in the world for that. The love days have gone by; but there is often seen hovering about one of these old women the remains of the "*bel giovane*" who won her heart and hand, in a tall, battered white hat, a short jacket, a waistcoat patched with old and new colours, and long blue stockings on his bent legs, who now plays second fiddle and fusses about the little establishment, rearranging the humble wares with tremulous hands, and looking round for customers, and indulging in chat about the weather and the times. She meanwhile sits calmly there with her *scaldino*, the master-spirit, who rules and decides all.

But to return to the beggars. At many of the convents in Rome it is the custom at noon to distribute, gratis, at the door, a quantity of soup, and any poor person may receive

a bowlful on demand. Many of the beggars thus become pensioners of the convents, and may be seen daily at the appointed hour, gathering round the door with their bowl and wooden spoon, in expectation of the *Frate* with the soup. This is generally made so thick with cabbage that it might be called a cabbage-stew ; but Soyer himself never made a dish more acceptable to the palate of the guests than this. No nightingales' tongues at a banquet of Tiberius, no edible birds'-nests at a Chinese feast, were ever relished with more gusto. I have often counted at the gates of the Convent of Capuchins, in the Via S. Basilio, from eighty to one hundred of these poor wretches, some stretched at length on the pavement, some gathered in groups under the shadow of the garden wall or on the steps of the studios, and discussing politics, Austria, France, Italy, Louis Napoleon, and Garibaldi, while they waited for their daily meal. When the bells ring for mid-day, the gates are opened and the crowd pours in ; and then, with their hats off, you may see them gathered round the caldron, from which a burly Capuchin ladles out soup into their wooden platters, after they have all repeated after him their "pater noster." The figures and actions of these poor wretches, after they have obtained their soup, make one sigh for human nature. Each, grasping his portion as if it were a treasure, separates himself immediately from his brothers, flees selfishly to a corner, if he can find one empty, or, if not, goes to a distance, turns his back on his friends, and, glancing anxiously at intervals all around, as if in fear of a surprise, gobbles up his cabbage, wipes out his bowl, and then returns to companionship or disappears. The idea of sharing his portion with those who are portionless occurs to him only as the idea of a robber to the mind of a miser.

Any account of the beggars of Rome, without mention of the Capuchins and Franciscans, would be like performing the "Merchant of Venice" with no Shylock ; for these

orders are founded in beggary and supported by charity. The priests do not beg; but their ambassadors, the lay-brothers, clad in their long, brown serge, a cord around their waist, and a basket on their arm, may be seen shuffling along at any hour and in every street, in dirty, sandalled feet, to levy contributions from shops and houses. Here they get a loaf of bread, there a pound of flour or rice, in one place fruit or cheese, in another a bit of meat, until their basket is filled. Sometimes money is given, but generally they are paid in articles of food. There is another set of these brothers, who enter your studio or ring at your bell, and present a little tin box with a slit in it, into which you are requested to drop any sum you please, for the holidays, for masses, for wax candles, etc. As a big piece of copper makes more ring than gold, it is generally given, and always gratefully received. Sometimes they will enter into conversation, and are always pleased to have a little chat about the weather. They are very poor, very good-natured, and very dirty. It is a pity they do not baptize themselves a little more with the material water of this world. But they seem to have a hydrophobia. Whatever the inside of the platter may be, the outside is far from clean. They walk by day and they sleep by night in the same old snuffy robe, which is not kept from contact with the skin by any luxury of linen, until it is worn out. Dirt and piety seem to them synonymous. In disbelieving moments, I cannot help applying to them Charles Lamb's famous speech,—“If dirt were trumps, what a hand they would have of it!” Yet, beggars as they are, by faith and profession, they have the reputation at Rome of being the most inoffensive of all the conventual orders, and are looked upon by the common people with kindness, as being thoroughly sincere in their religious professions. They are, at least, consistent in many respects in their professions and practice. They really mortify the flesh by penance, fasting, and wretched fare, as

well as by dirt. They do not proclaim the virtues and charms of poverty while they roll about in gilded coaches dressed in "purple and fine linen," or gloat over the luxuries of the table. Their vices are not the cardinal ones, whatever their virtues may be. The "Miracles of St. Peter," as the common people call the palaces of Rome, are not wrought for them. Their table is mean, and scantily provided with the most ordinary food. Three days in the week they eat no meat; and during the year they keep three *Quaresime*. But, good as they are, their sour, thin wine, on empty, craving stomachs, sometimes does a mad work; and these brothers in dirt and piety have occasionally violent rows and disputes in their refectories over their earthen bottles. It is only a short time since that my old friends the Capuchins got furious together over their wine, and ended by knocking each other about the ears with their earthen jars, after they had emptied them. Several were wounded, and had time to repent and wash in their cells. But one should not be too hard on them. The temper will not withstand too much fasting. A good dinner puts one at peace with the world, but an empty stomach is the habitation often of the Devil, who amuses himself there with pulling all the nerve-wires that reach up into the brain. I doubt whether even St. Simeon Stylites always kept his temper as well as he did his fast.

As I see them walking up and down the alleys of their vegetable garden, and under the sunny wall where, without the least asceticism, oranges glow and roses bloom during the whole winter, I do not believe in their doctrine, nor envy them their life. And I cannot but think that the thousands of *frati* who are in the Roman States would do quite as good service to God and man, if they were an army of labourers on the Campagna, or elsewhere, as in their present life of beggary and self-contemplation. I often wonder, as I look at them, hearty and stout as they are,

despite their mode of life, what brought them to this pass, what induced them to enter this order,—and recall, in this connection, a little anecdote current here in Rome, to the following effect:—A young fellow, from whom Fortune had withheld her gifts, having become desperate, at last declared to a friend that he meant to throw himself into the Tiber, and end a life which was worse than useless. “No, no,” said his friend, “don’t do that. If your affairs are so desperate, retire into a convent; become a Capuchin.” “*Ah, no!*” was the indignant answer; “I am desperate; but I have not yet arrived at such a pitch of desperation as that.”

Though the Franciscans live upon charity, they have almost always a garden connected with their convent, where they raise multitudes of cabbages, cauliflowers, fennel, peas, beans, artichokes, and lettuce. Indeed, there is one kind of the latter which is named after them,—*capuccini*. But their gardens they do not till themselves; they hire gardeners, who work for them. Now I cannot but think that working in a garden is just as pious an employment as begging about the streets, though, perhaps, scarcely as profitable. The opinion that, in some respects, it would be better for them to attend to this work themselves, was forced upon my mind by a little farce I happened to see enacted among their cabbages, the other day as I was looking down out of my window. My attention was first attracted by hearing a window open from a little three-story-high *loggia*, opposite, hanging over their garden. A woman came forth, and, from amid the flower-pots, which half concealed her, she dropped a long cord to the ground. “*Pst, Pst,*” she cried to the gardener at work below. He looked up, executed a curious pantomime, shrugged his shoulders, shook his forefinger, and motioned with his head and elbow sideways to a figure, visible to me, but not to her, of a brown Franciscan, who was amusing himself in gathering some

fennel, just round the corner of the wall. The woman, who was fishing for the cabbages, immediately understood the predicament, drew up her cord, disappeared from the *loggia*, and the curtain fell upon the little farce. The gardener, however, evidently had a little soliloquy after she had gone. He ceased working, and gazed at the unconscious Franciscan for some time, with a curious grimace, as if he were not quite satisfied at thus losing his little perquisite. And here, perhaps, a short account of the Capuchins may not be out of place or without interest.

The head-quarters of the Capuchins throughout the world is the Convent of Santa Maria della Concezione, close by the Piazza Barberini, and here resides the general of the order and his staff. The convent is very large, having no less than six hundred cells; but all of these are rarely if ever occupied. The *Famiglia* proper, by which term is meant the friars, both lay and clerical, belonging to it, number about one hundred and twenty; but as it is the chief house of all the provinces of Rome, the general hospital for sick and infirm is here, and there are always a certain number of friars in it who do not belong to the convent. To this must be added the visitors from all parts of the world, who come on ecclesiastical business, and for other reasons; and with these additions the number of persons in the convent does not generally vary much from about two hundred persons. The *padri* or priests are many of them well-educated men, as far as Latin and theology go, and they devote the chief part of their time to prayer and saying mass, giving the remainder, which is not much, to study. The lay-brothers are completely illiterate, and their occupation is to beg alms in the streets, to sweep the cells, cook the dinner, serve at table, and perform the menial duties of the convent. They also pretend to cultivate the garden, but they do this chiefly by proxy, "assisting," for the most part, in a purely French sense.

The cells in which they live are only about six feet by ten in size ; they are paved with brick, and, instead of glass, they have linen cloth in their windows. Their furniture is a crucifix, a bed or pallet, a vase of holy water, and some coarse print of a saint or two. They have no sheets upon their beds, but only blankets ; and they do not undress, but sleep in their monastic dresses, which are renewed once in three years. They wear no linen underclothes, and, unless their health requires it, no stockings ; and the result as to cleanliness may be easily imagined.

Connected with the convent is a factory, where the cloth, worn by the Capuchins throughout the Romagna, is woven, and where the leathern sandals are fashioned. But even in this, secular labour is called in, the friars having a certain unwillingness to do any labour. Pieces of cloth, already cut into the appropriate form, are distributed among the community once in three years, and each sews it up for himself.

Their life is by no means an enviable one. Their fare is very meagre, and their religious duties constant. Their day commences at midnight, when they are all roused from their beds by a sort of rattle of wood and iron, called a "*troccolo*," and by the sharp clang of the church bell, to say matins in the choir of the church. The scene here is then said to be very picturesque. A single oil lamp burning over the reading-desk is the sole light in the church. There stands the officiating priest, and reads the collects and lessons of the day, while the others gather in the shadow and chant their hymns and responses in hoarse bass voices, that echo through the vaulted choir. At the end of the matins the bell begins to toll, and the solemn *Te Deum* is sung, after which, without speaking, all return to their narrow cells. Sometimes, in the cold winter nights, sitting alone in a warm room, with all the comforts of life and warmth about me, as I hear the convent bell ringing at midnight, and know

that at its sound every one of the Capuchins, whether he be old, rheumatic, and weary, or not, must rise from his bed to go into that cold, cheerless chapel, and say his matins, my heart is touched with pity for them. But I hope habit makes it easier to them than it would be to me, and, at all events, the evil is mitigated by the fact that they do not have to dress.

At six o'clock in the morning the bell rings them to mass, and from this time forward the chief portion of the day is devoted to religious exercises; for what with masses, and hearing confessions, and accompanying funerals, and the canonical hours, and vespers, nocturns, and complines, little time can remain for anything else. One of their exercises, which they have in common with the Quakers, is that of silent meditation, which takes place in the morning, and at twilight, when the friars all meet and commune silently with themselves. On these occasions the blinds are closed so as to shut out the light, and here they remain without speaking for a half-hour. What they think about then they alone know. Of course the lay-brothers are not held very strictly to the religious exercises, or it would be scarcely possible for them to perform all their other functions.

These brown-cowled gentlemen are not the only ones who carry the tin box. Along the curbstones of the public walks, and on the steps of the churches, sit blind old creatures, who shake at you a tin box, outside of which is a figure of the Madonna, and inside of which are two or three *baiocchi*, as a rattling accompaniment to an unending invocation of aid. Their dismal chant is protracted for hours and hours, increasing in loudness whenever the steps of a passer-by are heard. It is the old strophe and antistrophe of begging and blessing, and the singers are so wretched that one is often softened into charity. Those who are not blind have often a new almanac to sell towards the end of the year, and at other times they vary the occupation of

shaking the box by selling lives of the saints, which are sometimes wonderful enough. One sad old woman, who sits near the Qauttro Fontane, and says her prayers and rattles her box, always touches my heart, there is such an air of forlornness and sweetness about her. As I was returning, last night, from a mass at San Giovanni in Laterano, an old man glared at us through great green goggles,—to which those of the “green-eyed monster” would have yielded in size and colour,—and shook his box for a *baiocco*. “And where does this money go?” I asked. “To say masses for the souls of those who die over opposite,” said he, pointing to the Hospital of San Giovanni, through the open doors of which we could see the patients lying in their beds.

Nor are these the only friends of the box. Often in walking the streets one is suddenly shaken in your ear, and turning round you are startled to see a figure entirely clothed in white from head to foot, a rope round his waist, and a white hood drawn over his head and face, and showing, through two round holes, a pair of sharp black eyes behind them. He says nothing, but shakes his box at you, often threateningly, and always with an air of mystery. This is a penitent *Saccone*; and as this *confraternità* is composed chiefly of noblemen, he may be one of the first princes or cardinals in Rome, performing penance in expiation of his sins; or, for all you can see, it may be one of your intimate friends. The money thus collected goes to various charities. The *Sacconi* always go in couples,—one taking one side of the street, the other the opposite,—never losing sight of each other, and never speaking. Clothed thus in secrecy, they can test the generosity of any one they meet with complete impunity, and they often amuse themselves with startling foreigners. Many a group of English girls, convoyed by their mother, and staring into some mosaic or cameo shop, is scared into a scream by the

sudden jingle of the box, and the apparition of the spectre in white who shakes it. And many a simple old lady retains to the end of her life a confused impression, derived therefrom, of inquisitions, stiletos, tortures, and banditti, from which it is vain to attempt to dispossess her mind. The stout old gentleman, with a bald forehead and an irascibly rosy face, takes it often in another way,—confounds the fellows for their impertinence, has serious notions, first, of knocking them down on the spot, and then of calling the police, but finally determines to take no notice of them, as they are nothing but foreigners, who cannot be expected to know how to behave themselves in a rational manner. Sometimes a holy charity (*santa elemosina*) is demanded after the oddest fashion. It was only yesterday that I met one of the confraternities, dressed in a shabby red suit, coming up the street, with the invariable oblong tin begging-box in his hand,—a picture of Christ on one side, and of the Madonna on the other. He went straight to a door opening into a large, dark room, where there was a full cistern of running water, at which several poor women were washing clothes, and singing and chattering as they worked. My red acquaintance suddenly opens the door, letting in a stream of light upon this Rembrandtish interior, and lifting his box with the most wheedling of smiles, he says, with a rising inflection of voice, as if asking a question,—“*Prezioso sangue di Gesù Cristo?*”—Precious blood of Jesus Christ?

Others of these disguised gentlemen of the begging-box sit at the corners of the streets or on the steps of the churches, or wander about, entering everywhere the shops, to collect sums for prisoners, and among these are often gentlemen of good family and fortune; others carry with them a sack, in which they receive alms in kind for the same purpose. The Romans are a charitable people, and they always give liberally of their store. In the Piazza della Rotonda and the Piazza Navona you will see these

brethren of the sack begging of the fruiterers and hucksters ; and few there are who refuse to add their little for the poor prisoners. As soon as they are told that the charity is for them, they drop into the sack a wedge of cheese, a couple of *provature*, a handful of rice, a loaf of bread, two or three oranges, apples, pears, or potatoes, or a good slice of polenta, saying, “ *Eh, poveracci, Dio li consoli, pigliate* ” (Ah, poor creatures, may God help them ! take these) ;—for you must remember a prisoner does not always mean a criminal in Rome. Sometimes into the box drops the last *baiocco* of some poor fellow, who, as he gives it, says, in Trastevere dialect—“ *Voi che siete un religioso di Dio, fateme buscà 'n ternetto, chè pozza pagà la pigione.* ”—Give me a winning terno in the lottery, to pay my rent.

There is another species of begging and extortion practised in Rome which deserves notice in this connection. Beside the perpetual hand held out by the mendicants in the street, there are festivals and ceremonials where the people demand, as of right, certain vails and presents called *mancie* and *propine*. The largesse which in old times used to be scattered by the Emperors who came to Rome to be crowned in St. Peter's is still given, after a degenerate way, upon the coronation of a Pope. Formerly it was the custom for the Pope to proceed to the church on horseback, his almoner following after him with two sacks of money in gold, silver, and copper, which he scattered among the crowds accompanying the Papal procession. But an accident having happened at the installation of Clement XIV., the Pope has ever since driven in a triumphal carriage ; and the largesse is now distributed by his almoner in the Cortile del Belvedere, where the proud inhabitants of the Borgo and Trastevere do not disdain to hold out their hands as they pass before him for the little sum of money which the Holy Father still gives to his faithful children on this august occasion—nay, more, they claim it as a right.

In like manner, on the beatification of a saint, all the intendants, secretaries, agents, and servants of every kind are entitled to a *mancia*; and so firmly established is this custom, that a specific time and place is appointed where they present themselves, and each receives his vail sealed up in an envelope of paper, and addressed to him by name.

Whenever a Cardinal is made Pope, by old custom all his clothes and furniture become the spoil of his servants. And as soon as the report of his election by the Conclave runs through the city, his apartments are at once sacked by them. Sometimes the report proves false, and the irritated Cardinal, whose ambitious hopes have crumbled into vexation, returning home, finds his luxurious rooms turned topsy-turvy, and not even a change of dress in his wardrobe. The first meeting of servants and master on such an occasion is agreeable to neither party; and it is not to be wondered at if the name of the Lord is sometimes taken in vain, and "*apoplexies*" are showered about in profusion.

Many of the servants of the princely houses and in the palaces of the Cardinals receive no wages, the *mancie*, which by time-honoured custom they are entitled to claim of visitors, affording an ample compensation. Indeed, in some houses, there are servants who pay for the privilege of serving there, their *mancie* far exceeding the fair rate of their wages. Some of these vails are expected on Christmas and New Year's-day, but besides these there are other stated occasions when the frequenters of the house are expected to give presents. If these seem to the servant insufficient in amount, they sometimes go so far as plainly to express their views, and scornfully to say, "*Signore, mi si viene de più: questa non è la misura della propina di sala*"—I am entitled to more—just as if they had presented a bill which you had refused to pay.

Padre Bresciani relates a good story *apropos* to these *mancie*, which he says occurred to some of his friends and

himself. They had requested a deacon of their acquaintance to give them a letter to the custode of a certain palace, in order that they might see some beautiful pictures there. With much courtesy the request was granted, and the little company drove at once to the palace, and presented the letter to the custode, a tall fellow of about thirty years of age. He took the letter, opened it, and after fumbling a little in his pockets for something, turned round to one of them, and said, "Excuse me, I have not my spectacles: would your Excellency have the goodness to read this for me?"

The gentleman appealed to then read as follows: "*Vi raccomando sommamente questi nobilissimi Signori, mostrate loro tutte le rarità del palazzo, ben intesi, accettando le vostre propine.*"—"I warmly recommend to you these most distinguished gentlemen: show them all the choice things in the palace,—accepting, of course, your present for so doing."

The clever custode, imagining that these gentlemen might consider that the letter rendered the *mancia* unnecessary, resorted to this trick to let them see that neither the deacon nor himself intended to dispense with it.

The last, but by no means the meanest, of the tribe of pensioners whom I shall mention, is my old friend, "Beefsteak,"—now, alas! gone to the shades of his fathers. He was a good dog,—a mongrel, a Pole by birth,—who accompanied his master on a visit to Rome, where he became so enamoured of the place that he could not be persuaded to return to his native home. Bravely he cast himself on the world, determined to live, like many of his two-legged countrymen, upon his wits. He was a dog of genius, and his confidence in the world was rewarded by its appreciation. He had a sympathy for the arts. The crowd of artists who daily and nightly flocked to the Lepre and the Caffè Greco attracted his notice. He introduced himself

to them, and visited them at their studios and rooms. A friendship was struck between them and him, and he became their constant visitor and their most attached ally. Every day, at the hour of lunch, or at the more serious hour of dinner, he lounged into the Lepre, seated himself in a chair, and awaited his friends, confident of his reception. His presence was always hailed with a welcome, and to every new comer he was formally presented. His bearing became, at last, not only assured, but patronizing. He received the gift of a chicken-bone or a delicate titbit as if he conferred a favour. He became an epicure, a *gourmet*. He did not eat much; he ate well. With what a calm superiority and gentle contempt he declined the refuse bits a stranger offered from his plate! His glance, and upturned nose, and quiet refusal, seemed to say,—“Ignoramus! know you not I am Beefsteak?” His dinner finished, he descended gravely and proceeded to the Caffè Greco, there to listen to the discussions of the artists, and to partake of a little coffee and sugar, of which he was very fond. At night he accompanied some one or other of his friends to his room, and slept upon the rug. He knew his friends, and valued them; but perhaps his most remarkable quality was his impartiality. He dispensed his favours with an even hand. He had few favourites, and called no man master. He never overstayed his welcome “and told the jest without the smile,” never remaining with one person for more than two or three days at most. A calmer character, a more balanced judgment, a better temper, a more admirable self-respect,—in a word, a profounder sense of what belongs to a gentleman, was never known in any dog. But Beefsteak is now no more. Just after the agitations of the Revolution of '48, with which he had little sympathy,—he was a conservative by disposition,—he disappeared. He had always been accustomed to make a *villeggiatura* at L'Arricia during a portion of the summer months, returning only now and then to look after

his affairs in Rome. On such visits he would often arrive towards midnight, and rap at the door of a friend to claim his hospitality, barking a most intelligible answer to the universal Roman inquiry, "*Chi è?*" "One morn we missed him at the accustomed" place, and thenceforth he was never seen. Whether a sudden home-sickness for his native land overcame him, or a fatal accident befell him, is not known. Peace to his manes! There "rests his head upon the lap of earth" no better dog.

In the Roman studio of one of his friends and admirers, Mr. Mason, I had the pleasure, a short time since, to see, among several admirable and spirited pictures of Campagna life and incidents, a very striking portrait of Beefsteak. He was sitting in a straw-bottomed chair, as we have so often seen him in the Lepre, calm, dignified in his deportment, and somewhat obese. The full brain, the narrow, fastidious nose, the sagacious eye, were so perfectly given, that I seemed to feel the actual presence of my old friend. So admirable a portrait of so distinguished a person should not be lost to the world. It should be engraved, or at least photographed.



CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

THE Christmas Holidays have come, and with them various customs and celebrations quite peculiar to Rome. They are ushered in by the festive clang of a thousand bells from all the belfries in Rome at Ave Maria of the evening before the august day. At about ^{half} nine o'clock of the same evening the Pope performs High Mass in some one of the great churches, generally at Santa Maria Maggiore, when the pillars of this fine old basilica are draped with red hangings, and scores of candles burn in the side-chapels, and the great altar blazes with light. The fuging chants of the Papal choir sound into the dome and down the aisles, while the Holy Father ministers at the altar, and a motley crowd parade, and jostle, and saunter through the church. Here, mingled together, may be seen soldiers of the Swiss guard, with their shining helmets, long halberds, and parti-coloured uniforms, designed by Michael Angelo,—chamberlains of the Pope, all in black, with high ruffs, Spanish cloaks, silken stockings, and golden chains,—peasants from the mountains, in rich-coloured costumes and white *tovaglie*,—common labourers from the Campagna, with black mops of tangled hair,—foreigners of every nation,—Englishmen, with sloping shoulders, long, light, pendant whiskers, and an eye-glass stuck in one eye,—Germans, with spectacles,

frogged coats, and long, straight hair put behind their ears and cut square in the neck,—Americans, in high-heeled patent-leather boots, shabby black dress-coats, black satin waistcoats, and beards shaved only from the upper lip,—and wasp-waisted French officers, with baggy trousers, goat-beards, and a pretentious swagger. Nearer the altar are crowded together in pens a mass of women in black dresses and black veils, who are determined to see and hear all, treating the ceremony purely as a spectacle, and not as a religious rite. Meantime the music soars, the organ groans, the censor clicks, and steams of incense float to and fro. The Pope and his attendants kneel and rise,—he lifts the Host and the world prostrates itself. A great procession of dignitaries with torches bears a fragment of the original cradle of the Holy Bambino from its chapel to the high altar, through the swaying crowd that gape, gaze, stare, sneer, and adore. And thus the evening passes. When the clock strikes midnight all the bells ring merrily, Mass commences at the principal churches, and at San Luigi dei Francesi and the Gesù there is a great illumination (what the French call *un joli spectacle*) and very good music. Thus Christmas is ushered in at Rome.

The next day is a great festival. All classes are dressed in their best and go to Mass,—and when that is over, they throng the streets to chat and lounge, and laugh and look at each other. The Corso is so crowded in the morning that a carriage can scarcely pass. Everywhere one hears the pleasant greeting of "*Buona Festa*," "*Buona Pasqua*." All the *bassa popolo*, too, are out,—the women wearing their best jewellery, heavy gold ear-rings, three rowed *collane* of well-worn coral and gold, long silver and gold pins and arrows in their hair, and great worked brooches with pendants,—and the men of the Trastevere in their peaked hats, their short jackets swung over one shoulder in humble imitation of the Spanish cloak, and rich scarfs tied round

their waists. Most of the ordinary cries of the day are missed. But the constant song of "*Arancie! arancie dolci!*" (oranges, sweet oranges) is heard in the crowd; and everywhere are the cigar-sellers carrying round their wooden tray of tobacco, and shouting "*Sigari! sigari dolci! sigari scelti!*" at the top of their lungs; the *nocellaro* also cries sadly out his dry chestnuts and pumpkin-seeds. The shops are all closed, and the shopkeepers and clerks saunter up and down the streets, dressed better than the same class anywhere else in the world,—looking spick-and-span, as if they had just come out of a bandbox, and nearly all of them carrying a little cane. One cannot but be struck by the difference in this respect between the Romans on a *festaday* in the Corso and the Parisians during a *fête* in the Champs Elysées,—the former are so much better dressed, and so much happier, gayer, and handsomer.

During the morning the Pope celebrates High Mass at San Pietro, and thousands of spectators are there,—some from curiosity, some from piety. Few, however, of the Roman families go there to-day;—they perform their religious services in their private chapel or in some minor church, for the crowd of foreigners spoils St. Peter's for prayer. At the elevation of the Host, the guards, who line the nave, drop to their knees, their side-arms ringing on the pavement,—the vast crowd bends,—and a swell of trumpets sounds through the dome. Nothing can be more impressive than this moment in St. Peter's. Then the choir from its gilt cage resumes its chant, the high falsetti of the soprano soaring over the rest, and interrupted now and then by the clear musical voice of the Pope,—until at last he is borne aloft in his Papal chair on the shoulders of his attendants, crowned with the triple crown, between the high, white, waving fans; all the cardinals, monsignori, canonici, officials, priests, and guards going before him in splendid procession. The Pope shuts his eyes, from giddiness and from fasting,—

for he has eaten nothing for twenty-four hours, and the swaying motion of the chair makes him dizzy and sick. But he waves at intervals his three fingers to bless the crowd that kneel or bend before him, and then goes home to the Vatican to dine with a clean conscience, and, let us hope, with a good appetite.

It is the custom in Rome at the great *festas*, of which Christmas is one of the principal ones, for each parish to send round the sacrament to all its sick ; and during these days a procession of priests and attendants may be seen, preceded by their cross and banner, bearing the holy wafer to the various houses. As they march along, they make the streets resound with the psalm they sing. Everybody lifts his hat as they pass, and many among the lower classes kneel upon the pavement. Frequently the procession is followed by a rout of men, women, and children, who join in the chanting and responses, pausing with the priest before the door of the sick person, and accompanying it as it moves from house to house.

At Christmas, all the Roman world which has a *baiocco* in its pocket eats *torone* and *pan giallo*. The shops of the pastrycooks and confectioners are filled with them, mountains of them encumber the counters, and for days before Christmas crowds of purchasers throng to buy them. *Torone* is a sort of hard candy, made of honey and almonds, and crusted over with crystallized sugar ; or, in other words, it is a *nuga* with a sweet frieze coat ;—but *nuga* is a trifle to it for consistency. *Pan giallo* is perhaps so called *quasi lucus*, it being neither bread nor yellow. I know no way of giving a clearer notion of it than by saying that its father is almond-candy, and its mother a plum-pudding. It partakes of the qualities of both its parents. From its mother it inherits plums and citron, while its father bestows upon it almonds and consistency. In hardness of character it is half-way between the two,—having neither the maternal tenderness

on the one hand, nor the paternal stoniness on the other. One does not break one's teeth on it as over the *torone*, which is only to be cajoled into masticability by prolonged suction, and often not then; but the teeth sink into it as the waggoner's wheels into clayey mire, and every now and then receive a shock, as from sunken rocks, from the raisin stones, indurated almonds, pistachio-nuts, and pine-seeds, which startle the ignorant and innocent eater with frightful doubts. I carried away one tooth this year over my first piece; but it was a tooth which had been considerably indebted to California, and I have forgiven the *pan giallo*. My friend the Conte Cignale, who partook at the same time of *torone*, having incautiously put a large lump into his mouth, found himself compromised thereby to such an extent as to be at once reduced to silence and retirement behind his pocket-handkerchief. An unfortunate jest, however, reduced him to extremities, and, after a vehement struggle for politeness, he was forced to open the window and give his *torone* to the pavement—and the little boys, perhaps. *Chi sa?* But despite these dangers and difficulties, all the world at Rome eats *pan giallo* and *torone* at Christmas,—and a Christmas without them would be an egg without salt. They are at once a penance and a pleasure. Not content with the *pan giallo*, the Romans also import the *pan forte di Sicna*, which is a blood cousin of the former, and suffers almost nothing from time and age.

On Christmas and New Year's-day all the servants of your friends present themselves at your door, to wish you a "*buona festa*," or a "*buon capo d' anno*." This generous expression of good feeling is, however, expected to be responded to by a more substantial expression on your part, in the shape of four or five pauls, so that one peculiarly feels the value of a large visiting-list of acquaintances at this season. To such an extent is this practice carried, that in the houses of the cardinals and princes places are sought by

servants merely for the vails of the *festas*, no other wages being demanded. Especially is this the case with the higher dignitaries of the Church, whose *maestro di casa*, in hiring domestics, takes pains to point out to them the advantages of their situation in this respect. Lest the servants should not be aware of all these advantages, the times when such requisitions may be gracefully made and the sums which may be levied are carefully indicated,—not by the cardinal in person, of course, but by his underlings; and many of the fellows who carry the umbrella and cling to the back of the cardinal's coach, covered with shabby gold-lace and carpet-collars, and looking like great beetles, are really paid by everybody rather than the master they serve. But this is not confined to the *Eminenze*, many of whom are, I dare say, wholly ignorant that such practices exist. The servants of the embassies and all the noble houses also make the circuit of the principal names on the visiting-list, at stated occasions, with good wishes for the family. If one rebel, little care will be taken that letters, cards, and messages arrive promptly at their destination in the palaces of their *padroni*; so it is a universal habit to thank them for their politeness, and to request them to do you the favour to accept a piece of silver in order to purchase a bottle of wine and drink your health. I never knew one of them refuse; probably they would not consider it polite to do so. It is curious to observe the care with which at the embassies a new name is registered by the servants, who scream it from anteroom to *salon*, and how considerately a deputation waits on you at Christmas and New Year, or, indeed, whenever you are about to leave Rome to take your *villeggiatura*, for the purpose of conveying to you the good wishes of the season or of invoking for you a "*buon viaggio*." One young Roman, a teacher of languages, told me that it cost him annually some twenty *scudi* or more to convey to the servants of his pupils and others his deep sense of the honour they did him in inquiring

for his health at stated times. But this is a rare case, and owing, probably, to his peculiar position. A physician in Rome, whom I had occasion to call in for a slight illness, took an opportunity on his first visit to put a very considerable *buona mano* into the hands of my servant, in order to secure future calls. I cannot, however, say that this is customary; on the contrary, it is the only case I know, though I have had other Roman physicians; and this man was in his habits and practice peculiarly un-Roman. I do not believe it, therefore, to be a Roman trait. On the other hand, I must say, for my servant's credit, that he told me the fact with a shrug, and added, that he could not, after all, recommend the gentleman as a physician, though I was *padrone*, of course, to do as I liked.

On Christmas Eve a *Presepio* is exhibited in several of the churches. The most splendid is that of the Ara Coeli, where the miraculous Bambino is kept. It lasts from Christmas to Twelfth-Night, during which period crowds of people flock to see it; and it well repays a visit. The simple meaning of the term *Presepio* is a manger, but it is also used in the Church to signify a representation of the birth of Christ. In the Ara Coeli the whole of one of the side-chapels is devoted to this exhibition. In the foreground is a grotto, in which is seated the Virgin Mary, with Joseph at her side and the miraculous Bambino in her lap. Immediately behind are an ass and an ox. On one side kneel the shepherds and kings in adoration; and above, God the Father is seen, surrounded by clouds of cherubs and angels playing on instruments, as in the early pictures of Raphael. In the background is a scenic representation of a pastoral landscape, on which all the skill of the scene-painter is expended. Shepherds guard their flocks far away, reposing under palm-trees or standing on green slopes which glow in the sunshine. The distances and perspective are admirable. In the middle ground is a crystal fountain of glass, near which sheep, pre-

ternaturally white, and made of real wool and cotton-wool, are feeding, tended by figures of shepherds carved in wood. Still nearer come women bearing great baskets of real oranges and other fruits on their heads. All the nearer figures are full-sized, carved in wood, painted, and dressed in appropriate robes. The miraculous Bambino is a painted doll, swaddled in a white dress, which is crusted over with magnificent diamonds, emeralds, and rubies. The Virgin also wears in her ears superb diamond pendants. Joseph has none; but he is not a person peculiarly respected in the Church. As far as the Virgin and Child are concerned, they are so richly dressed that the presents of the kings and wise men seem rather supererogatory,—like carrying coals to Newcastle,—unless, indeed, Joseph comes in for a share, as it is to be hoped he does. The general effect of this scenic show is admirable, and crowds flock to it and press about it all day long. Mothers and fathers are lifting their little children as high as they can, and until their arms are ready to break; little maids are pushing, whispering, and staring in great delight; peasants are gaping at it with a mute wonderment of admiration and devotion; and Englishmen are discussing loudly the value of the jewels, and wanting to know, by Jove, whether those in the crown can be real.

While this is taking place on one side of the church, on the other is a very different and quite as singular an exhibition. Around one of the antique columns of this basilica—which once beheld the splendours and crimes of the Cæsars' palace—a staging is erected, from which little maidens are reciting, with every kind of pretty gesticulation, sermons, dialogues, and little speeches, in explanation of the *Presepio* opposite. Sometimes two of them are engaged in alternate question and answer about the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Redemption. Sometimes the recitation is a piteous description of the agony of the Saviour and the sufferings of the Madonna,—the greatest stress being, however, always

laid upon the latter. All these little speeches have been written for them by their priest or some religious friend, committed to memory, and practised, with the appropriate gestures, over and over again at home. Their little piping voices are sometimes guilty of such comic breaks and changes, that the crowd about them rustles into a murmurous laughter. Sometimes, also, one of the very little preachers has an obstinate fit, pouts, shakes her shoulders, and refuses to go on with her part;—another, however, always stands ready on the platform to supply the vacancy, until friends have coaxed, reasoned, or threatened the little pouter into obedience. These children are often very beautiful and graceful, and their comical little gestures and intonations, their clasping of hands and rolling up of eyes, have a very amusing and interesting effect. The last time I was there I was sorry to see that the French costume had begun to make its appearance. Instead of the handsome Roman head, with its dark, shining, braided hair, which is so elegant when uncovered, I saw on two of the children the deforming bonnet, which could have been invented only to conceal a defect, and which is never endurable, unless it be perfectly fresh, delicate, and costly. Nothing is so vulgar as a shabby bonnet. Yet the Romans, despite their dislike of the French, are beginning to wear it. Ten years ago it did not exist here among the common people. I know not why it is that the three ugliest pieces of costume ever invented, the dress-coat, the trousers, and the bonnet, all of which we owe to the French, have been accepted all over Europe, to the exclusion of every national costume. Certainly it is not because they are either useful, elegant, or commodious.

If one visit the Ara Coeli during the afternoon of one of these *festas*, the scene is very striking. The flight of one hundred and twenty-four steps is then thronged by merchants of Madonna wares, who spread them out over the steps and hang them against the walls and balustrades. Here are to

be seen all sorts of curious little coloured prints of the Madonna and Child of the most ordinary quality, little bags, pewter medals, and crosses stamped with the same figures and to be worn on the neck,—all offered at once for the sum of one *baiocco*. Here also are framed pictures of the Saints, of the Nativity, and, in a word, of all sorts of religious subjects appertaining to the season. Little wax dolls, clad in cotton-wool to represent the Saviour, and sheep made of the same materials, are also sold by the basketful. Children and women are busy buying them, and there is a deafening roar all up and down the steps, of “*Mezzo baiocco, bello colorito, mezzo baiocco, la Santissima Concezione Incoronata*,”—“*Diario Romano, Lunario Romano Nuovo*,”—“*Ritratto colorito, medaglia e quadruccio, un baiocco tutti, un baiocco tutti*,”—“*Bambinelli di cera, un baiocco*.”* None of the prices are higher than one *baiocco*, except to strangers,—and generally several articles are held up together, enumerated, and proffered with a loud voice for this sum. Meanwhile men, women, children, priests, beggars, soldiers, and peasants are crowding up and down, and we crowd with them.

At last, ascending, we reach the door which faces towards the west. We lift the great leathern curtain and push into the church. A faint perfume of incense salutes the nostrils. The golden sunset bursts in as the curtain sways forward, illuminates the mosaic floor, catches on the rich golden ceiling, and flashes here and there over the crowd on some brilliant costume or shaven head. All sorts of people are thronging there,—some kneeling before the shrine of the Madonna, which gleams with its hundreds of silver votive hearts, legs, and arms,—some listening to the preaching,—some crowding round the chapel of the *Presepio*. Old

* “A half-*baiocco*, beautifully coloured,—a half-*baiocco*, the Holy Conception Crowned.” “Roman Diary,—New Roman Almanac.” “Coloured portrait, medal, and little picture, one *baiocco*, all.” “Little children in wax, one *baiocco*.”

women, haggard and wrinkled, come tottering along with their *scaldini* of coals, drop down on their knees to pray, and, as you pass, interpolate in their prayers a parenthesis of begging. The church is not architecturally handsome; but it is eminently picturesque, with its relics of centuries, its mosaic pulpits and floor, its frescoes of Pinturicchio and Pesaro, its antique columns, its rich golden ceiling, its Gothic mausoleum to the Savelli, and its mediæval tombs. A dim, dingy look is over all,—but it is the dimness of faded splendour; and one cannot stand there, knowing the history of the church, its great antiquity, and the various fortunes it has known, without a peculiar sense of interest and pleasure.

It was here that Romulus, in the gray dawning of Rome, built the temple of Jupiter Feretrius. Here the *spolia opima* were deposited. Here the triumphal processions of the Emperors and generals ended. Here the victors paused before making their vows, until, from the Mamertine Prisons below, the message came to announce that their noblest prisoner and victim, while the clang of their triumph and his defeat rose ringing in his ears as the procession ascended the steps, had expiated with death the crime of being the enemy of Rome. Up the steep steps, which then led to the temple of the Capitoline Jove, here, after his earliest triumph, the first great Cæsar climbed upon his knees. Here, murdered at their base, Rienzi, “last of the Roman tribunes,” fell. And, if the tradition of the Church is to be trusted, it was on the site of the present high altar that Augustus erected the “*Ara primogenito Dei*,” to commemorate the Delphic prophecy of the coming of our Saviour. Standing on a spot so thronged with memories, the dullest imagination takes fire. The forms and scenes of the past rise from their graves and pass before us, and the actual and visionary are mingled together in strange poetic confusion. Truly, as Walpole says, “our memory sees more than our eyes in this country.”

And this is one great charm of Rome,—that it animates the dead figures of its history. On the spot where they lived and acted, the Cæsars change from the manikins of books to living men; and Virgil, Horace, and Cicero grow to be realities, when we walk down the Sacred Way and over the very pavement they may once have trod. The conversations “De Claris Oratoribus” and the “Tusculan Questions” seem like the talk of the last generation, as we wander on the heights of Tusculum, or over the grounds of that charming villa on the banks of the Liris, which the great Roman orator so graphically describes in his treatise “De Legibus.” The landscape of Horace has not changed. Still in the winter you may see the dazzling peak of the “*gelidus Algidus*,” and “*ut alta stet nive candidum Soracte*,” and wandering at Tivoli in the summer, you quote his lines—

“Domus Albunæ resonantis,
Et præceps Anio, et Tiburni lucus, et uda
Mobilibus pomaria rivis,”

and feel they are as true and fresh as if they were written yesterday. Could one better his compliment to any Roman Lalage of to-day than to call her “*dulce ridentem*?” In all its losses, Rome has not lost the sweet smiling of its people. Would you like to know the modern rules for agriculture in Rome, read the “Georgics;” there is so little to alter that it is not worth mentioning. So, too, at Rome, the Emperors become as familiar as the Popes. Who does not know the curly-headed Marcus Aurelius, with his lifted brow and projecting eyes—from the full, round beauty of his youth to the more haggard look of his latest years? Are there any modern portraits more familiar than the severe, wedge-like head of Augustus, with his sharp-cut lips and nose,—or the dull phiz of Hadrian, with his hair combed down over his low forehead,—or the vain, perking face of Lucius Verus, with his thin nose, low brow, and profusion of curls,—or the

brutal bull-head of Caracalla,—or the bestial, bloated features of Vitellius?

These men, who were but lay-figures to us at school, mere pegs of names to hang historic robes upon, thus interpreted by the living history of their portraits, the incidental illustrations of the places where they lived and moved and died, and the buildings and monuments they erected, become like the men of yesterday. Art has made them our contemporaries. They are as near to us as Pius VII. and Napoleon. I never drive out of the old Nomentan Gate without remembering the ghastly flight of Nero,—his recognition there by an old centurion,—his damp, drear hiding-place underground, where, shuddering and quoting Greek, he waited for his executioners,—and his subsequent miserable and cowardly death, as narrated by Tacitus and Suetonius; and it seems nearer to me, more vivid, and more actual, than the death of Rossi in the court of the Cancellaria. I never drive by the Cæsars' palaces without recalling the ghastly jest of Tiberius, who sent for some fifteen of the Senators at dead of night and commanded their presence; and when they, trembling with fear, and expecting nothing less than that their heads were all to fall, had been kept waiting for an hour, the door opened, and he, nearly naked, appeared with a fiddle in his hand, and, after fiddling and dancing to his quaking audience for an hour, dismissed them to their homes uninjured. The air seems to keep a sort of spiritual scent or trail of these old deeds, and to make them more real here than elsewhere. The ghosts of history haunt their ancient habitations. Invisible companions walk with us through the silent, deserted streets of Pompeii. Vague voices call to us from the shattered tombs along the Via Appia; and looking out over the blue sea, through the columns of that noble villa, lately unearthed at Ostia, one almost seems to hear the robes of ancient senators sweeping along its rich mosaic floors. The Past hovers like a subtle

aura around the Present. Places, as well as persons, have lives and influences; touching our natures to mysterious issues. Haunted by its crimes, oppressed and debilitated by the fierce excesses of its Empire, Rome, silent, grave, and meditative, sighs over its past, wrapped in the penitent robes of the Church.

Besides, here one feels that the modern Romans are only the children of their ancient fathers, with the same characteristics,—softened, indeed, and worn down by time, just as the sharp traits of the old marbles have worn away; but still the same people,—proud, passionate, lazy, jealous, vindictive, easy, patient, and able. The Popes are but Church pictures of the Emperors,—a different robe, but the same nature beneath;—Alexander VI. was but a second Tiberius,—Pius VII. a modern Augustus. When I speak of the Roman people, I do not mean the class of hangers-on upon the foreigners, but the Trasteverini and the inhabitants of the provinces and mountains. No one can go through the Trastevere, when the people are roused, without feeling that they are the same as those who listened to Marcus Antonius and Brutus, when the bier of Cæsar was brought into the streets,—and as those who fought with the Colonna, and stabbed Rienzi at the foot of the Capitol steps. The Ciceruacchio of '48 was but an ancient Tribune of the People, in the primitive sense of that title. I like, too, to parallel the anecdote of Caius Marius, when, after his ruin, he concealed himself in the marshes, and astonished his captors, who expected to find him weak of heart, by the magnificent self-assertion of “I am Caius Marius,” with the story which is told of Stefano Colonna. One day, at Arles, he fell into the hands of his enemies, and they, not recognizing him, cried out “Who are you?” “Stefano Colonna, citizen of Rome,” was his dauntless reply,—and, struck by his heroic bearing, they suffered him to go free. Again, after this great captain met with his sad reverses, and, deprived

of all his possessions, fled from Rome, an attendant asked him,—“What fortress have you now?” He placed his hand on his heart, and answered,—“*Eccola!*” The same blood evidently ran in the veins of both these men; and well might Petrarca call Colonna “a phoenix risen from the ashes of the ancient Romans.”

But, somehow or other, I have wandered strangely away from the Ara Coeli and out of the present century—I beg pardon, but how can one help it in Rome, where the past and the present are so inexplicably tangled together?

The Santissimo Bambino is a wooden image, carved, as the legend goes, from a tree on the Mount of Olives, by a Franciscan pilgrim, and painted by St. Luke while the pilgrim slept. The carving of this figure gives us by no means a high notion of the skill of the pilgrim as a sculptor, and the painting is on a par with the carving. It is not, however, for its merit as a work of art that this image is celebrated, but for the wonderful powers in curing the sick, with which it is supposed to be invested. So deeply rooted is this notion in the popular mind, that its aid is in constant requisition in severe cases, and certain it is that a cure not unfrequently follows upon his visit; but as the regular physicians always cease their attendance upon his entrance, and blood-letting and calomel are consequently intermitted, perhaps the cure is not so miraculous as it might at first seem. He is always borne in state to his patients; and during the Triumvirate of '49 the carriage of the Holy Father was given to him and his attendants. Ordinarily he is carried in a great tan-coloured coach, outside of which waves a vermillion flag, while within are two *Frata minori*; one with the *stola*, and the other with a lighted torch. As he passes through the streets the people kneel or cross themselves; the women covering their heads with their apron or handkerchief, as they always do when entering a consecrated place, and the more superstitious crying out, “Oh

Santo Bambino, give us thy blessing! oh *Santo Bambino*, cure our diseases! lower the water of the Tiber; heal Lisa's leg; send us a good carnival; give us a winning *terno* in the lottery," or anything else they want.

I was assured by the priest who exhibited him to me at the church, that, on one occasion, having been stolen by some irreverent hand from his ordinary abiding-place in one of the side chapels, he returned alone, by himself, at night, to console his guardians and to resume his functions. Great honours are paid to him. He wears jewels which a Colonna might envy, and not a square inch of his body is without a splendid gem. On festival occasions, like Christmas, he bears a coronet as brilliant as the triple crown of the Pope, and, lying in the Madonna's arms in the representation of the Nativity, he is adored by the people until Epiphany. Then, after the performance of Mass, a procession of priests, accompanied by a band of music, makes the tour of the church and proceeds to the chapel of the *Presepio*, where the bishop, with great solemnity, removes him from his mother's arms. At this moment the music bursts forth into a triumphant march, a jubilant strain over the birth of Christ, and he is borne through the doors of the church to the great steps. There the bishop elevates the Holy Bambino before the crowds who throng the steps, and they fall upon their knees. This is thrice repeated, and the wonderful image is then conveyed to its original chapel, and the ceremony is over.

It is curious to note in Rome how many a modern superstition has its root in an ancient one, and how tenaciously customs still cling to their old localities. On the Capitoline Hill the bronze she-wolf was once worshipped* as the wooden

* "Romuli nutrix lupa honoribus est affecta divinis," says Lactantius, *De Falsa Religione*, lib. i. cap. 20, p. 101, edit. var. 1660. According to Dionysius, a wolf in brass, of ancient workmanship, was in the temple of Romulus in the Palatine (*Antiq. Rom.*, lib. i.). Livy also speaks of

Bambino is now. It stood in the Temple of Romulus, and there the ancient Romans used to carry children to be cured of their diseases by touching it. On the supposed site of this temple now stands the church dedicated to St. Theodoro, or Santo Toto as he is called in Rome. Though names have changed, and the temple has vanished, and church after church has here decayed and been rebuilt, the old superstition remains, and the common people at certain periods still bring their sick children to Santo Toto, that he may heal them with his touch.

The Eve of Epiphany, or Twelfth-Night, is to the children of Rome what Christmas Eve is to us. It is then that the *Befana* (a corruption, undoubtedly, of *Epifania*) comes with her presents. This personage is neither merry nor male, like Santa Claus, nor beautiful and childlike, like Christkindchen,—but is described as a very tall, dark woman, ugly, and rather terrible, “*d’ una fisionomia piuttosto imponente,*” who comes down the chimney, on the Eve of Epiphany, armed with a long *canna* and shaking a bell, to put playthings into the stockings of the good children, and bags of ashes into those of the bad. It is a night of fearful joy to all the little ones. When they hear her bell ring

one as standing under the Ruminal fig-tree (Hist., lib. x. cap. 59). Cicero speaks of one as existing on the Capitol, “*quem inauratum in Capitolis parvum et lactantem uberibus lupinis inhiantem fuisse.*” In *Catilinam* iii. 3; see also Cicero de *Divin.* ii. 20. Dion Cassius also speaks of the same wolf on the Capitol (lib. 37); see also Montfaucon, *Diarium Italicum*, t. i., p. 174, to the same effect. Which of these wolves it is that is now preserved in the museum of the Capitol has afforded a “very pretty quarrel” to archæologists. Winckelmann declares it to have been found in the church of St. Theodorus, on the site, or close by the site, of the Temple of Romulus, and therefore the wolf described by Dionysius; but the authority he cites (Faunus) scarcely bears him out in this assertion. One thing seems to be quite clear, that one of the brazen wolves was on the Capitol, and received divine honours.

they shake in their sheets ; for the Befana is used as a threat to the wilful, and their hope is tempered by a wholesome apprehension ; and well they may, if she is like what Berni paints her—

“Ha gli occhi rossi ed il viso furibondo.
I labbri grossi, e par la Befania.”

Benidetto Buommattei, in an amusing Idyll, gives her, however, a much better character than her appearance would seem to suggest—

“Io son colei, che al cominciar dell’ erta
Abito del Castalio in certe grotte,
Onde non parto mai, che in questa notte.
Avete inteso ancora,
Donne ? Io son la Befana.
Di che vi spaurite ?
Che credete, ch’ io sia
Come si dice, qualche mala cosa ?
Non abbiate paura, moccicone,
Ch’ io non fo mal nè a bestia nè a persone.
Io giovo sempre a tutti, e più alle Donne,
Che mi per sempre amiche.
Non vennè quà da quelle amene balze
Per altro che per empievi le calze
De’ miei ricchi presenti.
So pur, che voi sapete la possanza
Ch’ io ho sopra i mortali
Sin di cangiar il sesso e la figura.
Per questo ognun all’ opra mia ricorre,
Uomini, donne, bestie ed animali.”

The celebration of Epiphany is of very ancient date, and is stated by Domenico Manni, who has written a little treatise on this subject, to have been instituted about the year 350, by Julius I. Previous to his time it seems not to have been a separate festival, but to have been mixed up with other festivals, probably of Pagan origin. It is now generally supposed only to celebrate the visit of the Magian kings to the cradle of Christ ; but the office of the day still performed

in the Roman Church clearly proves that it also celebrates the Baptism of Christ and the first miracle of changing water into wine at the marriage in Cana.—“*Tribus miraculis ornatum diem sanctum colimus. Hodie stella magos duxit ad Præsepium; hodie vinum ex aqua factum est ad nuptias; hodie in Jordano a Johanne Christus baptizari voluit.*”

It is curious to trace in the *Befana* of Italy, and in the popular superstitious notions and usages of this country at Epiphany, the distorted reflections not only of the Christian history, but also of the pagan mythology and festivals which took place at this time. The gifts, which it is the universal practice of Christendom to present to children at Christmas or Twelfth-Night, are but symbols of the treasures brought to the infant Christ by the wise men. The baptism has left its trace in the *canna* of St. John, which is always borne by the *Befana*. In some parts of Italy it is also a superstition that at midnight of the eve of Epiphany sheep have the power of speech—“*le pecore la notte di Befana favellano.*” Sant’ Epifanio, who lived in the fourth century, declares that in his time, on this night the water of a certain river was changed into wine. And it is still a popular superstition, derived undoubtedly from the miracle at Cana, that then also extraordinary transformations of things take place—such as that the walls are changed into cheese, the bed sheets into a kind of paste called Lasagne, and water into exquisite wine. Mixed up with these, also, are reminiscences of the Murder of the Innocents; for on this night it is said that the *Befana* goes wandering about, not only with presents, but also to stab and prick the bodies of bad children. The best way to avoid this punishment is to eat beans, which form, therefore, a common dish on Twelfth-Night; but another mode of avoiding these persecutions is to place a mortar on the body, and to offer up for good luck a certain prayer composed expressly for this occasion, and called the *Avemaria della Befana*. In Venice, Girolamo Tartarotti

informs us that this figure is called Radòdese, which is probably a corruption of the name of Herod, or Erode.

It is curious, too, to note how the physiognomy of this imaginary character varies among different nations and under different influences. The Christ-kindchen of Germany is an image of the infant Christ himself. The Santa Claus is a clumsier impersonation, in which the figures of the ancient Teutonic legend are scarcely hidden under the Christian garb of the Church; while the Befana of Italy is a bizarre creature, made up of fragments and spoils from various scriptural figures.

As far back as the twelfth century, mysteries and *pia spectacula* were given, representing the visit of the kings to Christ, and the flight into Egypt. And Galvano della Fiamma, the Milanese historian, tells us that it was the custom in Milan, in the year 1326, for three persons crowned, dressed as kings, mounted on large horses, and followed by a great concourse of people, to go through the streets at Epiphany, with a golden star carried before them; and this procession went to the square of San Lorenzo, where was seated a person representing King Herod, and surrounded by the scribes and wise men, when a long dialogue took place between them. In other places, a beautiful girl was put upon an ass, carrying an infant in her arms, and followed by an old man on foot, which was intended, of course, to represent the flight into Egypt. In later times these celebrations were travestied by the Befana, who went through the streets accompanied by persons carrying burning brooms, or sheaves of straw, ringing bells, and blowing horns and whistles; and even to the present day, in some places, a figure stuffed with straw, and dressed grotesquely, is carried in procession through the streets, and followed by a cheering and hooting crowd.

The burning broom which was carried in the procession of the Befana was not without significance; for according to

some legend she is said to have been an old woman, who was engaged in cleaning the house when the three kings passed carrying their presents to the infant Christ. She was called to the window to see them, but being too intent on the worldly matters of the household, she declined to intermit her sweeping, saying, "I will see them as they return." Unfortunately the kings did not return by the same road, and the old woman is represented as waiting and watching for them eternally. She is, in fact, a sort of female wandering Jew, who never lays aside her broom.

On Epiphany eve, there may be seen in many of the houses and shops in Rome boys disguised as women, who with blackened faces, a fantastic cap on their heads, a long *canna* in one hand and a lantern in the other, represent the Befana. At their feet are baskets of sweetmeats, apples, and fruit, and hanging from their necks are stockings filled with various presents. Some of these contain fruit and toys for the good children, and are accompanied with letters of congratulation and good wishes; others have nothing in them but bags of ashes for the bad children, and letters containing threats and reproofs.

But the great festival of the Befana takes place in Rome on the eve of Twelfth-Night, in the Piazza di Sant' Eustachio, —and a curious spectacle it is. The Piazza itself (which is situated in the centre of the city, just beyond the Pantheon), and all the adjacent streets are lined with booths covered with every kind of plaything for children. Most of these are of Roman make, very rudely fashioned, and very cheap; but for those who have longer purses there are not wanting heaps of German and French toys. These booths are gaily illuminated with rows of candles and the three-wick'd brass lamps of Rome; and, at intervals, painted posts are set into the pavement, crowned with pans of grease, with a wisp of tow for wick, from which flames blaze and flare about. Besides these, numbers of torches carried about by hand lend

a wavering and picturesque light to the scene. By eight o'clock in the evening crowds begin to fill the Piazza and the adjacent streets. Long before one arrives the squeak of penny-trumpets is heard at intervals; but in the Piazza itself the mirth is wild and furious, and the din that salutes one's ears on entering is almost deafening. The object of every one is to make as much noise as possible, and every kind of instrument for this purpose is sold at the booths. There are drums beating, tambourines thumping and jingling, pipes squeaking, watchmen's rattles clacking, penny-trumpets and tin horns shrilling, the sharpest whistles shrieking,—and mingling with these is heard the din of voices, screams of laughter, and the confused burr and buzz of a great crowd. On all sides you are saluted by the strangest noises. Instead of being spoken to, you are whistled at. Companies of people are marching together in platoons, or piercing through the crowd in long files, and dancing, and blowing like mad on their instruments. It is a perfect witches' sabbath. Here, huge dolls dressed as Pulcinella or Pantaloon are borne about for sale,—or over the heads of the crowd great black-faced jumping-jacks, lifted on a stick, twitch themselves in fantastic fits,—or, what is more Roman than all, long poles are carried about strung with rings of hundreds of *ciambelle* (a light cake, called jumble in English), which are screamed for sale at a *mezzo baiocco* each. There is no alternative but to get a drum, whistle, or trumpet—join in the racket—and fill one's pockets with toys for the children and absurd presents for older friends. The moment you are once in for it, and making as much noise as you can, you begin to relish the jest. The toys are very odd—particularly the Roman whistles;—some of these are made of pewter, with a little wheel that whirls as you blow; others are of terra-cotta, very rudely modelled into every shape of bird, beast, and human deformity, each with a whistle in its head, breast, or tail, which it is no joke to hear when blown

close to your ears by a stout pair of lungs. The scene is extremely picturesque. Above, the dark vault of night, with its far stars, the blazing and flaring of lights below, and the great, dark walls of the Sapienza and Church looking grimly down upon the mirth. Everywhere in the crowd are the glistening helmets of soldiers who are mixing in the sport, and the *chapeaux* of white-strapped *gendarmes* standing at intervals to keep the peace. At about half-past eleven o'clock the theatres are emptied, and the upper classes flock to the Piazza. I have never been there later than half-past twelve, but the riotous fun still continued at that hour; and, for a week afterwards, the squeak of whistles may be heard at intervals in the streets.

The whole month of December was formerly dedicated to Saturn, and was given up to the wild festivities of the Saturnalia, of which Carnival and Twelfth-Night retain many striking features. The Moccoletti, for instance, is manifestly a reproduction of the Saturnalian Cerei; and the ancient custom of electing a mock king at this season is still a characteristic ceremony of Twelfth-Night. Under Augustus, the Saturnalia Proper only occupied three days, the 17th, 18th, and 19th of December; but two days were afterwards added under the name of the Opalia; and, still later, the Sigillaria increased the number of days to seven. This last festival received its name from the *Sigilla*, which were then exposed for sale and given as toys to children; and these *sigilla* were neither more nor less than little earthenware figures, similar to those which form so striking a peculiarity in the modern celebration of Epiphany in the Piazza Sant' Eustachio.

The custom of giving and receiving presents at Epiphany is by no means confined to children. It is universal, extending even to the Pope and College of Cardinals, and assuming the form of a religious and symbolical ceremony. On Epiphany morning, the Cardinal Prodatario, who is head

of College of ninety-nine apostolic writers, used, by ancient custom, formerly to present the members of the College to the Pope, upon which one of the members, after pronouncing a Latin address, placed in his hands a Tribute, or Befana as it was called, consisting of a hundred ducats in gold placed in a cup or chalice of silver which was valued at thirty-five *scudi*. This chalice was, however, sometimes of gold, and together with the ducats made up the sum of 200 *scudi*. The Pope in accepting it made a reply in Latin, and graciously allowed the writers to kiss his foot. This ceremony has been omitted since the year 1802; but the Befana tribute, of the value of 200 *scudi*, is still presented to the Pope by the Cardinal Prodatario in behalf of the College—and still graciously accepted.

At the two periods of Christmas and Easter the young Roman girls take their first communion. The former, however, is generally preferred, as it is a season of rejoicing in the Church, and the ceremonies are not so sad as at Easter. In entering upon this religious phase of their life, it is their custom to retire to a convent, and pass a week in prayer and reciting the offices of the Church. During this period, no friend, not even their parents, is allowed to visit them, and information as to their health and condition is very reluctantly and sparingly given at the door. In case of illness the physician of the convent is called; and even then neither parent is allowed to see them, except, perhaps, in very severe cases. Of course, during their stay in the convent, every exertion is made by the sisters to render a monastic life agreeable, and to stimulate the religious sensibilities of the young communicant. The pleasures of society and the world are decried, and the charms of peace, devotion, and spiritual exercises eulogized, until, sometimes, the excited imagination of the communicant leaves her no rest before she has returned to the convent and taken the veil as a nun. The happiness of families is thus sometimes de-

stroyed ; and I knew one very united and pleasant Roman family which in this way was sadly broken up. Two of three sisters were so worked upon at their first communion, that the prayers of family and friends proved unavailing to retain them in their home. The more they were urged to remain the more they desired to go, and the parents, brothers, and remaining sister were forced to yield a most reluctant consent. They retired into the convent and became nuns. It was almost as if they had died. From that time forward the home was no longer a home. I saw them when they took the veil, and a sadder spectacle was not easily to be seen. The girls were happy, but the parents and family wretched, and the parting was tearful and sad. They do not seem since to have regretted the step they then took ; but regret would be unavailing,—and even if they felt it they could scarcely show it. The occupation of the sisters in the monastery they have joined is prayers, the offices of the Church, and, I believe, a little instruction of poor children. But gossip among themselves, of the pettiest kind, must make up for the want of wider worldly interests. In such limited relations little jealousies engender great hypocrisies ; a restricted horizon enlarges small objects. The repressed heart and introverted mind, deprived of their natural scope, consume themselves in self-consciousness, and duties easily degenerate into routine. We are not all in all to ourselves ; the world has claims upon us, which it is cowardice to shrink from and folly to deny. Self-forgetfulness is a great virtue, and selfishness a great vice. After all, the best religious service is honest labour. Large interests keep the heart sound ; and the best of prayers is the doing of a good act with a pure purpose.

“He prayeth best who loveth best
All things, both great and small ;
For the dear God who loveth us,
He made and loveth all.”



CHAPTER V.

LENT.

THE gay confusion of Carnival is over, with its mad tossing of flowers and *bonbons*, its showering of *confetti*, its brilliantly-draped balconies running over with happy faces, its barbaric races, its rows of joyous *contadine*, its quaint masquerading, and all the glad folly of its Saturnalia. For Saturnalia it is, in most respects just like the *fiesta* of the Ancient Romans, with its *Saturni septem dies*, its uproar of "*Io Saturnalia!*" in the streets, and all its mad frolic. In one point it materially differs, however; for on the ancient *fiesta* no criminal could be punished, but in modern times it is this gay occasion that the government selects to execute (*giustiziare!*) any poor wretch who may have been condemned to death, so as to strike a wholesome terror into the crowd! But all is over now. The last *moccolotti* are extinguished, that flashed and danced like myriads of fire-flies from window and balcony, and over the heads of the roaring tide of people that ebbed and flowed in hurrying eddies of wild laughter through the streets. The Corso has become sober and staid, and taken in its draperies. The fun is finished. The masked balls, with their *belle maschere*, are over. The theatres are all closed. Lent has come, bringing its season of sadness, and the gay world of strangers is flocking down to Naples.

Eh, Signore! Finito il nostro carnevale. Adesso è il carnevale dei preti:—"Our carnival is over, and that of the priests has come." All the *frati* are going round to every Roman family, high and low, from the prince in his palace to the boy in the *caffè*, demanding "*una santa elemosina, —un abbondante santa elemosina,—ma abbondante,*"—and willingly pocketing any sum, from a half-*baiocco* upwards. The parish priest is now making his visits in every ward of the city, to register the names of the Catholics in all the houses, so as to insure a confession from each during this season of penance. And woe to any wight who fails to do his duty!—he will soon be brought to his marrow-bones. His name will be placarded in the church, and he will be punished according to circumstances,—perhaps by a mortification to the pocket, perhaps by the penance of the convent; and perhaps his fate will be worse, if he be obstinate. So nobody is obstinate, and all go to confession like good Christians, and confess what they please, for the sake of peace, if not of absolution. The *Francescani* march more solemnly up and down the alleys of their cabbage-garden, studiously, with books in their hands, which they pretend to read; now and then taking out their snuff-stained bandanna and measuring it from corner to corner, in search of a feasible spot for its appropriate function: they are, however, really only feeling by the hem for the inside, for an Italian looks upon a handkerchief as a bag, the outside of which is never to be used, so that he may safely roll it up again into a little round ball, and polish off his nose with it before returning it to his pocket. Whatever penance they do is not to Father Tiber or Santa Acquedotto, excepting by internal ablutions,—the exterior things of this world being ignored. There is no meat-eating now, save on certain festivals, when a supply is laid in for the week. But opposites cure opposites (contrary to the homœopathic rule), and their *magro* makes them *grasso*. Two days of

festival, however, there are in the little church of San Patrizio and Isidoro, when the streets are covered with sand, and sprigs of box and red and yellow hangings flaunt before the portico, and scores of young boy-priests invade their garden, and, tucking up their long skirts, run and scream among the cabbages; for boyhood is an irrepresible thing, even under the extinguisher of a priest's black dress.

Daily you will hear the tinkle of a bell and the chant of high child-voices in the street, and, looking out, you will see two little boys clad in some refuse of the Church's wardrobes, one of whom carries a crucifix or a big black cross, while the other rings a bell and chants as he loiters along; now stopping to chaff with other boys of a similar age,—nay, even at times laying down his cross to dispute or struggle with them,—and now renewing the appeal of the bell. This is to call together the children of the parish to learn their Catechism, or to exercise them in their Latin responses—and these latter they will rattle off generally with an amazing volubility, and for the most part without an idea of what they mean.

Meantime the snow is gradually disappearing from Monte Gennaro and the Sabine Mountains. Picnic parties are spreading their tables under the Pamfili Doria pines, and drawing St. Peter's from the old wall near by the ilex avenue,—or making excursions to Frascati, Tusculum, and Albano,—or spending a day in wandering among the ruins of the Etruscan city of Veii, lost to the world so long ago that even the site of it was unknown to the Cæsars,—or strolling by the shore at Ostia, or under the magnificent *pineta* at Castel Fusano, whose lofty trees repeat, as in a dream, the sound of the blue Mediterranean that washes the coast at half a mile distant. There is no lack of places that Time has shattered and strewn with relics, leaving Nature to festoon her ruins and heal her wounds with

tenderest vines and flowers, where one may spend a charming day and dream of the old times.

Spring has come. The nightingales already begin to bubble into song under the Ludovisi ilexes and in the Barberini Gardens. Daisies have snowed all over the Campagna,—periwinkles star the grass,—crocuses and anemones impurple the spaces between the rows of springing grain along the still brown slopes. At every turn in the streets basketsful of sweet-scented Parma violets are offered you by little girls and boys; and at the corner of the Condotti and Corso is a splendid show of camellias, set into beds of double violets, and sold for a song. Now and then one meets huge baskets filled with these delicious violets, on their way to the confectioners and *caffes*, where they will be made into syrup; for the Italians are very fond of this *bibita*, and prize it not only for its flavour, but for its medicinal qualities. Violets seem to rain over the villas in the spring,—acres are purple with them, and the air all around is sweet with their fragrance. Every day scores of carriages are driving about the Borghese grounds, which are open to the public, and hundreds of children are running about, plucking flowers and playing on the lovely slopes and in the shadows of the noble trees, while their parents stroll at a distance and wait for them in the shady avenues. At the Pamfili Doria villa the English play their national game of cricket on the flower-enamelled green, which is covered with the most wondrous anemones; and there is a *matinée* of friends who come to chat and look on. This game is rather “slow” at Rome, however, and does not rhyme with the Campagna. The Italians lift their hands and wonder what there is in it to fascinate the English; and the English in turn call them a lazy, stupid set, because they do not admire it. But those who have seen *pallone* will not, perhaps, so much wonder at the Italians, nor condemn them for not playing their own game, when they

remember that the French have turned them out of their only amphitheatre adapted for it, and left them only *pazienza*.

If one drives out at any of the gates he will see that spring is come. The hedges are putting forth their leaves, the almond-trees are in full blossom, and in the vineyards the *contadini* are setting cane-poles and trimming the vines to run upon them. Here and there along the slopes the rude antique plough, dragged heavily along by great gray oxen, turns up the rich loam, that needs only to be tickled to laugh out in flowers and grain. In the olive-orchards the farmers are carefully pruning away decayed branches and loosening the soil about their old roots. Here and there the smoke of distant bonfires, burning heaps of useless stubble, shows against the dreamy purple hills like the pillar of cloud that led the Israelites. One smells the sharp odour of these fires everywhere, and hears them crackle in the fields :—

“Atque levem stipulam crepitantibus urere flammis.”

On *fiesta*-days the way-side *osterias* (*con cucina*) are crowded by parties who come out to sit under the green arbours of vines, drink wine grown on the very spot, and regale themselves with a fry of eggs and chopped sausages, or a slice of lamb, and enjoy the delicious air that breathes from the mountains. The old cardinals descend from their gilded carriages, and, accompanied by one of their household, and followed by their ever-present lackeys in harlequin liveries, totter along on foot with swollen ankles, lifting their broad red hats to the passers-by who salute them, and pausing constantly in their discourse to enforce a phrase or take a pinch of snuff. Files of scholars from the Propaganda stream along, now and then, two by two, their leading-strings swinging behind them, and in their ranks all shades of physiognomy, from African and Egyptian to Irish and

American. Youths from the English College, and Germans, in red, go by in companies. All the minor schools, too, will be out,—little boys, in black hats, following the lead of their priest-master (for all masters are priests), orphan girls in white, conveyed by Sisters of Charity, and the deaf and dumb with their masters. Scores of *ciociari*, also, may be seen in faded scarlets, with their wardrobes of wretched clothes, and sometimes a basket with a baby in it, on their heads. The *contadini*, who have been to Rome to be hired for the week to labour on the Campagna, come tramping along, one of them often mounted on a donkey, and followed by a group carrying their implements with them; while hundreds of the middle classes, husbands and wives with their children, and *paini* and *paine* with all their jewellery on, are out to take their holiday stroll, and to see and be seen.

Once in a while the sadness of Lent is broken by a Church festival, when all the fasters eat prodigiously, and make up for their usual Lenten fare. One of the principal days is that of the 19th of March, dedicated to San Giuseppe (the most ill-used of all the saints), when the little church in Capo le Case, dedicated to him, is hung with brilliant draperies, and the pious flock thither in crowds to say their prayers. The great curtain is swaying to and fro constantly as they come and go, and a file of beggars is on the steps to relieve you of *baiocchi*. Beside them stands a fellow who sells a print of the Angel appearing to San Giuseppe in a dream, and warning him against the sin of jealousy. Four curious lines beneath the print thus explain it:—

“ Qual sinistro pensier l' alma ti scuote ?
 Se il sen fecondo di Maria tu vedi,
 Giuseppe, non temer ; calmati, e credi
 Ch' opra è sol di colui che tutto puote.”

Whether Joseph is satisfied or not with this explanation it

would be difficult to determine from his expression. He looks rather haggard and bored than persuaded, and certainly has not that cheerful acquiescence of countenance which one is taught to expect.

During all Lent, a sort of bun, called *maritozze*, which is filled with the edible kernels of the pine-cone, made light with oil, and thinly crusted with sugar, is eaten by the faithful,—and a very good Catholic “institution” it is. But in the festival days of San Giuseppe, gaily-ornamented booths are built at the corner of many of the streets, especially near the church in Capo le Case, in the Borgo, and at Sant’ Eustachio, which are adorned with great green branches as large as young trees, and hung with red and gold draperies, where the “*Frittelle di San Giuseppe*” are fried in huge caldrons of boiling oil and lard, and served out to the common people. These fritters, which are a delicate batter mixed sometimes with rice, are eaten by all good Catholics, though one need not be a Catholic to find them excellent eating. In front of the principal booths are swung “*Sonetti*” in praise of the Saint, of the cook, and of the dough-nuts,—some of them declaring that Mercury has already descended from Olympus at the command of the gods to secure a large supply of the fritters, and praying all believers to make haste, or there will be no more left. The latter alternative seems little probable, when one sees the quantity of provision laid in by the vendors. Their prayer, however, is heeded by all; and a gay scene enough it is,—especially at night, when the great cups filled with lard are lighted, and the shadows dance on the crowd, and the light flashes on the tinsel-covered festoons that sway with the wind, and illuminates the booth, while the smoke rises from the great caldrons which flank it on either side, and the cooks, all in white, ladle out the dripping fritters into large polished platters, and laugh and joke, and laud their work, and shout at the top of their lungs, “*Ecco le*

belle, ma belle frittelle !" For weeks this frying continues in the streets; but after the day of San Giuseppe, not only the sacred fritters are made, but thousands of minute fishes, fragments of cauliflower, *broccoli*, cabbage, and artichokes go into the hissing oil, and are heaped upon the platters and vases. For all sorts of fries the Romans are justly celebrated. The sweet olive oil, which takes the place of our butter and lard, makes the fry light, delicate, and of a beautiful golden colour; and, spread upon the snowy tables of these booths, their odour is so appetizing, and their look so inviting, that I have often been tempted to join the crowds who fill their plates and often their pocket-handkerchiefs (*con rispetto*) with these golden fry, "*fritti dorati*," as they are called, and thus do honour to the Saint, and comfort their stomachs with holy food, which quells the devil of hunger within.

This festival of San Giuseppe, which takes place on the 19th of March, bears a curious resemblance to the *Liberalia* of the ancient Romans, a festival in honour of Bacchus, which was celebrated every year on the 17th of March, when priests and priestesses, adorned with garlands of ivy, carried through the city wine, honey, cakes, and sweetmeats, together with a portable altar, in the middle of which was a small fire-pan (*foculus*), in which, from time to time, sacrifices were burnt. The altar has now become a booth, the *foculus* a caldron, the sacrifices are of little fishes as well as of cakes, and San Giuseppe has taken the place of Bacchus, Liber Pater; but the festivals, despite these differences, have such grotesque points of resemblance that the latter looks like the former, just as one's face is still one's face, however distortedly reflected in the bowl of a spoon; and perhaps, if one remembers the third day of the Anthesteria, when cooked vegetables were offered in honour of Bacchus, by putting it together with the *Liberalia*, we shall easily get the modern *fiesta* of San Giuseppe.

But not only at this time and at these booths are good *fritti* to be found. It is a favourite mode of cooking in Rome; and a mixed fry (*fritta mista*) of bits of liver, brains, cauliflower, and artichokes is a staple dish, always ready at every restaurant. At any *osteria con cucina* on the Campagna one is also sure of a good omelet and salad; and, sitting under the vines, after a long walk, I have made as savoury a lunch on these two articles as ever I found in the most glittering restaurant in the Palais Royal. If one add the background of exquisite mountains, the middle distance of flowery slopes, where herds of long-haired goats, sheep, and gray oxen are feeding among the skeletons of broken aqueducts, ruined tombs, and shattered mediæval towers, and the foreground made up of picturesque groups of peasants, who lounge about the door, and come and go, and men from the Campagna, on horseback, with their dark, capacious cloaks and long ironed staff, who have come from counting their oxen and superintending the farming, and *carrettieri*, stopping in their hooded wine-carts or ringing along the road,—there is, perhaps, as much to charm the artist as is to be seen while sipping beer or *eau gazeuse* on the hot Parisian *asphalte*, where the *grisette* studiously shows her clean ankles, and the dandy struts in his patent-leather boots.

One great *festa* there is during Lent at the little town of Grotta-Ferrata, about fourteen miles from Rome. It takes place on the 25th of March, and sometimes is very gay and picturesque, and always charming to one who has eyes to see and has shed some of his national prejudices. By eight o'clock in the morning open carriages begin to stream out of the Porta San Giovanni, and in about two hours may be seen the old castellated monastery, at whose foot the little village of Grotta-Ferrata stands. As we advance through noble elms and plane-trees, crowds of peasants line the way, beggars scream from the banks, donkeys bray,

carrette rattle along, until at last we arrive at a long meadow which seems alive and crumbling with gaily-dressed figures that are moving to and fro as thick as ants upon an ant-hill. Here are gathered peasants from all the country villages within ten miles, all in their festal costumes; along the lane which skirts the meadow and leads through the great gate of the old fortress, donkeys are crowded together, and keeping up a constant and outrageous concert; mountebanks, in harlequin suits, are making faces or haranguing from a platform, and inviting everybody into their penny-show. From inside their booths is heard the sound of the invariable pipes and drum, and from the lifted curtain now and then peers forth a comic face, and disappears with a sudden scream and wild gesticulation. Meantime the closely-packed crowd moves slowly along in both directions, and on we go through the archway into the great courtyard. Here, under the shadow of the monastery, booths and benches stand in rows, arrayed with the produce of the country villages,—shoes, rude implements of husbandry, the coarse woven fabrics of the country people, hats with cockades and rosettes, feather brooms and brushes, and household things, with here and there the tawny pinchbeck ware of a pedlar of jewellery, and little framed pictures of the Madonna and saints. Extricating ourselves from the crowd, we ascend by a stone stairway to the walk around the parapets of the walls, and look down upon the scene. How gay it is! Around the fountain, which is spilling in the centre of the court, a constantly varying group is gathered, washing, drinking, and filling their flasks and vases. Near by, a charlatan, mounted on a table, with a canvas behind him painted all over with odd cabalistic figures, is screaming, in loud and voluble tones, the virtues of his medicines and unguents, and his skill in extracting teeth. One need never have a pang in tooth, ear, head, or stomach, if one will but trust his wonderful promises. In one little bottle he

has the famous water which renews youth ; in another, the lotion which awakens love, or cures jealousy, or changes the fright into the beauty. All the while he plays with his tame serpents, and chatters as if his tongue went of itself, while the crowd of peasants below gape at him, laugh with him, and buy from him. Listen to him, all who have ears !—

Udite, udite, O rustici !
Attenti, non fiatate !
Io già suppongo e immagino
Che al par di me sappiate
Che io son quel gran medico
Dottore Enciclopedico
Chiamato Dulcamara,
La cui virtù preclara
E i portenti infiniti
Son noti in tutto il mondo—*e in altri siti.*

Benefattor degli uomini,
Reparator dei mali,
In pochi giorni io sgombrerò.
Io spazzo gli spedali,
E la salute a vendere
Per tutto il mondo io vo.
Compratela, compratela,—
Per poco io ve la do.

È questo l' odontalgico,
Mirabile liquore,
De' topi e dei cimici
Possente distruttore,
I cui certificati
Autentici, bollati,
Toccar, vedere, e leggere,
A ciaschedun farò.
Per questo mio specifico
Simpatico, prolifico,
Un uom settuagenario
E valetudinario
Nonno di dieci bamboli
Ancora diventò.

O voi matrone rigide,
 Ringiovanir bramate ?
 Le vostre rughe incommode
 Con esso cancellate.
 Volete, voi donzelle,
 Ben liscia aver la pelle ?
 Voi giovani galanti,
 Per sempre avere amanti,
 Comprate il mio specifico,—
 Per poco io ve lo do.

Ei muove i paralitici,
 Spedisce gli apoplefici,
 Gli asmatici, gli artritici,
 Gli isterici, e diabetici ;
 Guarisce timpanitidi
 E scrofoli e rachitidi ;
 E fino il mal di fegato,
 Che in moda diventò.
 Comprate il mio specifico,—
 Per poco io ve lo do.

And so on and on and on. There is never an end of that voluble gabble. Nothing is more amusing than the Italian *ciarlatano*, wherever you meet him ; but, like many other national characters, he is vanishing, and is seen more and more rarely every year.

But to return to the fair and our station on the parapets at Grotta-Ferrata. Opposite us is a pent-house, (where nobody peaks and pines,) covered with green boughs, whose jutting eaves and posts are adorned with gay draperies ; and under the shadow of this is seated a motley set of peasants at their lunch and dinner. Smoking plates come in and out of the dark hole of a door that opens into kitchen and cellar, and the waiters flourish their napkins and cry constantly, "*Vengo subito*," "*Eccomi quà*,"—whether they come or not. Big-bellied flasks of rich Grotta-Ferrata wine are filled and emptied ; bargains are struck for cattle, donkeys, and clothes ; healths are pledged ; and toasts are given, and

passatella is played. But there is no riot and no quarrelling. If we lift our eyes from this swarm below, we see the exquisite Campagna with its silent, purple distances stretching off to Rome, and hear the rush of a wild torrent scolding in the gorge below among the stones and olives.

But while we are lingering here, a crowd is pushing through into the inner court, where mass is going on in the curious old church. One has now to elbow his way to enter, and all around the door, even out into the middle court, *contadini* are kneeling. Besides this, the whole place reeks intolerably with garlic, which, mixed with whiffs of incense from the church within and other unmentionable smells, make such a compound that only a brave nose can stand it. But stand it we must, if we would see Domenichino's frescoes in the chapel within; and as they are among the best products of his cold and clever talent, we gasp and push on,—the most resolute alone getting through. Here in this old monastery, as the story goes, he sought refuge from the fierce Salvator Rosa, by whom his life was threatened, and here he painted some of his best works, shaking in his shoes with fear. When we have examined these frescoes, we have done the fair of Grotta-Ferrata; and those of us who are wise and have brought with us a well-packed hamper, stick in our hat one of the red artificial roses which everybody wears, take a charming drive to the Villa Conti, Muti, or Falconieri, and there, under the ilexes, forget the garlic, finish the day with a picnic, and return to Rome when the western sun is painting the Alban Hill.

And here, in passing, one word on the onions and garlic, whose odour issues from the mouths of every Italian crowd, like the fumes from the maw of Fridolin's dragon. Everybody eats them in Italy; the upper classes show them to their dishes to give them a flavour, and the lower use them not only as a flavour but as a food. When only a formal introduction of them is made to a dish, I confess that the

result is far from disagreeable ; but that close, intimate, and absorbing relation existing between them and the lowest classes is frightful. *Senza complimenti*, it is "tolerable and not to be endured." When a poor man can procure a raw onion and a hunch of black bread, he does not want a dinner ; and towards noon many and many a one may be seen sitting like a king upon a doorstep, or making a statuesque finish to a palace *portone*, cheerfully munching this spare meal, and taking his siesta after it, full-length upon the bare pavement, as calmly as if he were in the perfumed chambers of the great :—

"Under the canopies of costly state,
And lulled with sounds of sweetest melody."

And, indeed, so he is ; for the canopy of the soft blue sky is above him, and the plashing fountains lull him to his dreams. Nor is he without ancient authority for his devotion to those twin saints, Cipollo and Aglio. There is an "odour of sanctity" about them, turn up our noses as we may. The ancient Egyptians offered them as first-fruits upon the altars of their gods, and employed them also in the services for the dead ; and such was their attachment to them, that the followers of Moses hankered after them despite the manna, and longed for "the leeks and the onions and the garlic which they did eat in Egypt freely." Nay, even the fastidious Greeks not only used them as a charm against the Evil Eye, but ate them with delight. In the "Banquet" of Xenophon, Socrates specially recommends them, and Galen discourses wisely and at length on their admirable qualities. On this occasion, several curious reasons for their use are adduced, of which we who despise them should not be ignorant. Niceratus says that they relish well with wine, citing Homer in confirmation of his opinion ; Callias affirms that they inspire courage in battle ; and Charmidas clenches the matter by declaring that they are most useful in "deceiving

a jealous wife, who, finding her husband return with his breath smelling of onions, would be induced to believe he had not saluted any one while from home." Despise them not, therefore, O Saxon! for their pedigree is long, and they are sacred plants. Happily for you, if these reasons do not persuade you against your will, there is a certain specific against them,—*Eat them yourself*, and you will smell them no longer.

The time of the church processions is now coming, and one good specimen takes place on the 29th of March, from the Santa Maria in Via, which may stand with little variations for all the others. These processions, which are given by every church once a year, are in honour of the Madonna, or some saint specially revered in the particular church. They make the circuit of the parish limits, passing through all its principal streets, and every window and balcony is decorated with yellow and crimson hangings, and with crowds of dark eyes. The front of the church, the steps, and the street leading to it are spread with yellow sand, over which are scattered sprigs of box. After the procession has been organized in the church, they "come unto these yellowsands," preceded by a band of music, which plays rather jubilant, and what the unco pious would call profane music, of polkas and marches, and airs from the operas. Next follow great lanterns of strung glass drops, accompanied by soldiers; then an immense gonfalon representing the Virgin at the Cross, which swings backwards and forwards, borne by the confraternity of the parish, with blue capes over their white dresses, and all holding torches. Then follows a huge wooden cross, garlanded with golden ivy-leaves, and also upheld by the confraternity, who stagger under its weight. Next come two crucifixes, covered, as the body of Christ always is during Lent and until Resurrection-day, with cloth of purple (the colour of passion), and followed by the *frati* of the church in black, carrying candles and dolorously

chanting a hymn. Then comes the bishop in his mitre, his yellow stole upheld by two principal priests, (the curate and sub-curate,) and to him his acolytes waft incense, as well as to the huge figure of the Madonna which follows. This figure is of life-size, carved in wood, surrounded by gilt angels, and so heavy that sixteen stout porters, whose shabby trousers show under their improvised costume, are required to bear it along. With this the procession comes to its climax. Immediately after follow the guards, and a great concourse of the populace closes the train.

As Holy Week approaches, pilgrims begin to flock to Rome with their oil-cloth capes, their scallop-shell, their long staffs, their rosaries, and their dirty hands held out constantly for "*una santa elemosina pel povero pellegrino.*" Let none of my fair friends imagine that she will find a Romeo among them, or she will be most grievously disappointed. There is something to touch your pity in their appearance, though not the pity akin to love. They are, for the most part, old, shabby, soiled, and inveterate mendicants,—and though, some time or other, some one or other may have known one of them for her true-love "by his cockle hat and staff, and his sandal shoon," that time has been long forbye, unless they are wondrously disguised. Besides these pilgrims, and often in company with them, bands of peasants, with their long staffs, may be met on the road, making a pilgrimage to Rome for the Holy Week, clad in splendid *ciociari* dresses, carrying their clothes on their heads, and chanting a psalm as they go. Among these may be found many a handsome youth and beautiful maid, whose faces will break into the most charming of smiles as you salute them and wish them a happy pilgrimage. And of all smiles, none is so sudden, open, and enchanting as a Roman girl's; breaking out over their dark, passionate faces, black eyes, and level brows, like a burst of sunlight from behind a cloud. There must be noble possibilities in any

nation which, through all its oppression and degradation, has preserved the childlike frankness of an Italian smile.

Still another indication of the approach of Holy Week is the Easter egg, which now makes its appearance, and warns us of the solemnities to come. Sometimes it is stained yellow, purple, red, green, or striped with various colours; sometimes it is crowned with paste-work, representing, in a most primitive way, a hen,—her body being the egg, and her pastry-head adorned with a disproportionately tall feather. These eggs are exposed for sale at the corners of the streets and bought by everybody, and every sort of ingenious device is resorted to to attract customers and render them attractive. This custom is probably derived from the East, where the egg is the symbol of the primitive state of the world and of the creation of things. The new year formerly began at the spring equinox, about Easter; and at that period of the renewal of Nature, a festival was celebrated in the new moon of the month Phamenoth, in honour of Osiris, when painted and gilded eggs were exchanged as presents, in reference to the beginning of all things. The transference of the commencement of the year to January deprived the Paschal egg of its significance. Formerly in France, and still in Russia as in Italy, it had a religious significance, and was never distributed until it had received a solemn benediction. On Good Friday, a priest in his robes, with an attendant, may be seen going into every door in the street to bless the house, the inhabitants, and the eggs. The last, coloured and arranged according to the taste of the individual, are spread upon a table, which is decorated with box, flowers, and whatever ornamental dishes the family possesses. The priest is received with bows at the door; and when he has sprinkled holy water around and given his benediction he is rewarded with the gratuity of a *paul* or a *scudo*, according to the piety and purse of the proprietor; while into the basket of his attendant is always dropped

a loaf of bread, a couple of eggs, a *baiocco*, or some such trifle.

The egg plays a prominent part in the religions of the ancient world, and serious discussions are to be found in Plutarch and Macrobius, whether the egg or the hen was first produced: philosophers and learned men declared that the egg contained in itself all four elements, and was therefore a microcosm. It was used in auguries, and was placed by the ancient Romans on the table at the beginning of their repasts; and at the feasts in honour of the dead it also had a prominent place. The ancient Jews at Pasqua, after purifying and cleansing the house, placed hard eggs on the table as a symbol; as well as cakes, dates, and dried figs. The Greeks and Romans also used the egg in expiations, and when they blessed the houses and temples, and sprinkled them with lustral water, they carried an egg with them. The account of the blessing of a ship by Apuleius might also stand for a description of the modern ceremony at Pasqua. "The high priest," he says, "carrying a lighted torch and an egg, and some sulphur, made the most solemn prayers with his chaste lips, completely purified it, and consecrated it to the goddess."

Beside the blessing of the eggs and house, it is the custom in some parts of Italy, (and I have particularly observed it in Siena,) for the priest, at Easter, to affix to the door of the chief palaces and villas a waxen cross, or the letter M in wax, so as to guard the house from evil spirits. But only the houses of the rich are thus protected; for the priests bestow favours only "for a consideration," which the poor cannot so easily give.

Among the celebrations which take place throughout Italy at this period, is one which, though not peculiar to Rome, deserves record here for its singularity. On Good Friday it is the custom of the people of Prato (a little town near Florence) to celebrate the occasion by a procession, which

takes place after nightfall, and is intended to represent the procession to the Cross. The persons composing it are mounted on horseback and dressed in fantastic costumes, borrowed from the theatrical wardrobe, representing Pontius Pilate, the centurions, guards, executioners, apostles, and even Judas himself. Each one carries in one hand a flaring torch, and in the other some emblem of the Crucifixion, such as the hammer, pincers, spear, sponge, cross, and so on. The horses are all unshod, so that their hoofs may not clatter on the pavement; and, with a sort of mysterious noiselessness, this singular procession passes through all the principal streets, illuminated by torches that gleam picturesquely on their tinsel-covered robes, helmets, and trappings. This celebration only takes place once in three years; and, on the last occasion but one, a tremendous thunderstorm broke over the town as the procession was passing along. The crowd thereupon incontinently dispersed, and the unfortunate person who represented Judas, trembling with superstitious fear, fell upon his knees, and, after the fashion of Nick Bottom the weaver, who relieved the Duke Theseus by declaring that he was only a lion's fell and not a veritable lion, cried out to the Madonna, "*Misericordia per me!*" Have mercy on me! I am not really Judas, but only the cobbler at the corner, who is representing him—all for the glory of the blessed Bambino." And in consideration of this information the Madonna graciously extended him her potent aid, and saved his valuable life—but he has henceforth rejoiced in the popular nickname of Judas.

It is on this day, too, that the customary Jew is converted, recants, and is baptized; and there are not wanting evil tongues which declare that there is a wonderful similarity in his physiognomy every year. However this may be, there is no doubt that some one is annually dug out of the Ghetto, which is the pit of Judaism here in Rome; and if he fall back again, after receiving the temporal reward, and without

waiting for the spiritual, he probably finds it worth his while to do so, in view of the zeal of the Church, and in remembrance of the fifteenth verse of the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, if he ever reads that portion of the Bible. It is in the great basaltic vase in the baptistery of St. John Lateran, the same in which Rienzi bathed in 1347, before receiving the insignia of knighthood, that the converted Jew, and any other infidel who can be brought over, receives his baptism when he is taken into the arms of the Church.

It is at this season, too, that the *pizzicheria* shops are gaily dressed in the manner so graphically described by Hans Andersen in his "Improvisatore." No wonder, that, to little Antonio, the interior of one of these shops looked like a realization of Paradise; for they are really splendid; and when glittering with candles and lamps at night, the effect is very striking. Great sides of bacon and lard are ranged endwise in regular bars all around the interior, and adorned with stripes of various colours, mixed with golden spangles and flashing tinsel; while over and under them, in reticulated work, are piled scores upon scores of brown cheeses, in the form of pyramids, columns, towers, with eggs set into their interstices. From the ceiling, and around the doorway, hang wreaths and necklaces of sausages,—or groups of long gourd-like cheeses, twined about with box,—or netted wire baskets filled with Easter eggs,—or great bunches of white candles gathered together at the wicks. Seen through these, at the bottom of the shop, is a picture of the Madonna, with scores of candles burning about it, and gleaming upon the tinsel hangings and spangles with which it is decorated. Underneath this, there is often represented an elaborate *presepio*, or, when this is not the case, the animals may be seen mounted here and there on the cheeses. Candelabri of eggs, curiously bound together, so as to resemble bunches of gigantic white grapes, are swung from the centre of the ceiling,—and cups of coloured glass, with

a taper in them, or red paper lanterns, and *terra-cotta* lamps, of the antique form, show here and there their little flames among the fitches of bacon and cheeses; while, in the midst of all this splendour, the figure of the *pizzicagnolo* moves to and fro, like a high priest at a ceremony. Nor is this illumination exclusive. The doors, often of the full width of the shop, are thrown wide open, and the glory shines upon all passers-by. It is the apotheosis of ham and cheese, at which only the Hebraic nose, doing violence to its natural curve, turns up in scorn; while true Christians crowd around it to wonder and admire, and sometimes to venture in upon the almost enchanted ground. May it be long before this pleasant custom dies out!

At last comes Holy Week, with its pilgrims that flock from every part of the world. Every hotel and furnished apartment is crowded,—every carriage is hired at double and treble its ordinary fare,—every door, where a Papal ceremony is to take place, is besieged by figures in black with black veils. The streets are filled with Germans, English, French, Americans, all on the move, coming and going, and anxiously inquiring about the ceremonies, and when they are to take place, and where,—for everything is kept in a charming condition of perfect uncertainty, from the want of any public newspaper or journal, or other accurate means of information. So everybody asks everybody, and everybody tells everybody, until nobody knows anything, and everything is guesswork. But, nevertheless, despite impatient words, and muttered curses, and all kinds of awkward mistakes, the battle goes bravely on. There is terrible fighting at the door of the Sistine Chapel, to hear the *Miserere*, which is sure to be Baini's when it is said to be Allegri's, as well as at the railing of the Chapel, where the washing of the feet takes place, and at the supper-table, where twelve country boors represent the Apostolic company, and are waited on by the Pope, in a way that shows how great a sham the whole

thing is. The air is close to suffocation in this last place. Men and women faint and are carried out. Some fall and are trodden down. Sometimes, as at the table a few years ago, some unfortunate pays for her curiosity with her life. It is "Devil take the hindmost!" and if any one is down, he is leaped over by men and women indiscriminately, for there is no time to be lost. In the Chapel, when once they are in, all want to get out. Shrieks are heard as the jammed mass sways backward and forward,—veils and dresses are torn in the struggle,—women are praying for help. Meantime the stupid Swiss keep to their orders with a literalness which knows no parallel; and all this time, the Pope, who has come in by a private door, is handing round beef and mustard and bread and potatoes to the gormandizing Apostles, who put into their pockets what their stomachs cannot hold, and improve their opportunities in every way. At last those who have been through the fight return at nightfall, haggard and ghastly with fear, hunger, and fatigue; and, after agreeing that they could never counsel any one to such an attempt, set off the next morning to attack again some shut door behind which a "function" is to take place.

All this, however, is done by the strangers. The Romans, on these high festivals, do not go to Saint Peter's, but perform their religious services at their parish churches, calmly and peacefully; for in Saint Peter's all is a spectacle. "How shall I, a true son of the Holy Church," asks Pasquin, "obtain admittance to her services?" And Marforio answers, "Declare you are an Englishman, and swear you are a heretic."

The Piazza is crowded with carriages during all these days, and a hackman will look at nothing under a *scudo* for the smallest distance, and, to your remonstrances, he shrugs his shoulders and says, "*Eh, signore, bisogna vivere; adesso è la nostra settimana, e poi niente.*" "Next week I will take

you anywhere for two *pauls*,—now for fifteen.* Meluccio (the little old apple), the aged boy in the Piazza San Pietro, whose sole occupation it has been for years to open and shut the doors of carriages and hold out his hand for a *mezzo-baiocco*, is in great glee. He runs backwards and forwards all day long,—hails carriages,—identifies to the bewildered coachmen their lost fares, whom he never fails to remember,—points out to bewildered strangers the coach they are hopelessly striving to identify, having entirely forgotten coachman and carriage in the struggle they have gone through. He is everywhere, screaming, laughing, and helping everybody. It is his high festival as well as the Pope's, and grateful strangers drop into his hand the frequent *baiocco* or half-*paul*, and thank God and Meluccio as they sink back in their carriages and cry, "*A casa.*"

Finally comes Easter Sunday, the day of the Resurrection: at twelve on the Saturday previous all the bells are rung, the crucifixes uncovered, and the Pope, cardinals, and priests change their mourning-vestments for those of rejoicing. Easter has come. You may know it by the ringing bells, the sound of trumpets in the street, the firing of guns from the windows, the explosions of mortars planted in the pavement; and of late years,—the dispensation of French generals, who are in chronic fear of a revolution on all festal days,—by the jar of long trains of cannon going down to the Piazza San Pietro, to guard the place and join in the dance, in case of a rising among the populace.

By twelve o'clock Mass in Saint Peter's is over, and the Piazza is crowded with people to see the Benediction,—and a grand, imposing spectacle it is! Out over the great balcony stretches a white awning, where priests and attendants are collected, and where the Pope will soon be seen.

* The government, since this was written, has established a very fair tariff for hackney coaches; but, in recognition of old customs, allows a double fare to be charged at this season.

Below, the Piazza is alive with moving masses. In the centre are drawn up long lines of soldiery, with yellow and red pompons and glittering helmets and bayonets. These are surrounded by crowds on foot, and at the outer rim are packed carriages filled and overrun with people mounted on the seats and boxes. There is a half-hour's waiting while we can look about, a steady stream of carriages all the while pouring in, and, if one could see it, stretching out a mile behind, and adding thousands of impatient spectators to those already there. What a sight it is!—above us the great dome of Saint Peter's, and below, the grand embracing colonnade and the vast space, in the centre of which rises the solemn obelisk, thronged with masses of living beings. Peasants from the Campagna and the mountains are moving about everywhere. Pilgrims in oil-cloth cape and with iron staff demand charity. On the steps are rows of purple, blue, and brown umbrellas; for there the sun blazes fiercely. Everywhere crop forth the white hoods of Sisters of Charity, collected in groups, and showing among the parti-coloured dresses like beds of chrysanthemums in a garden. One side of the massive colonnade casts a grateful shadow over the crowd beneath, that fill up the intervals of its columns; but elsewhere the sun burns down and flashes everywhere. Mounted on the colonnade are crowds of people leaning over, beside the colossal statues. Through all the heat is heard the constant splash of the two sun-lit fountains, that wave to and fro their veils of white spray. At last the clock strikes. In the far balcony, beneath the projecting awning that casts a patch of soft transparent shadow along the golden sun-lit *façade*, and surrounded by a group of brilliant figures, are seen two huge fans of snowy peacock plumes, and between them a figure clad in white rises from a golden chair, and spreads his great sleeves like wings as he raises his arms in benediction. That is the Pope, Pius the Ninth. All is dead silence, and a musical voice, sweet and pene-

trating, is heard chanting from the balcony ;—the people bend and kneel ; with a cold gray flash the forest of bayonets gleams as the soldiers drop to their knees, and rise to salute as the voice dies away, and the two white wings are again waved ;—then thunder the cannon,—the bells clash and peal joyously,—and a few white papers, like huge snowflakes, drop wavering from the balcony ; these are Indulgences, and there is an eager struggle for them below ;—then the Pope again rises, again gives his benediction, waving to and fro his right hand, three fingers open, and making the sign of the cross,—and the peacock fans retire, and he between them is borne away,—and Lent is over.

As Lent is ushered in by the dancing lights of the *moccoletti*, so it is ushered out by the splendid illumination of St. Peter's, which is one of the grandest spectacles in Rome. The first illumination is by means of paper lanterns, distributed everywhere along the architectural lines of the church, from the steps beneath its portico to the cross above its dome. These are lighted before sunset, and against the blaze of the western light are for some time completely invisible ; but as twilight thickens, and the shadows deepen, and a gray pearly veil is drawn over the sky, the distant basilica begins to show against it with a dull furnace-glow, as of a wondrous coal fanned by a constant wind, looking not so much lighted from without as reddening from an interior fire. Slowly this splendour grows, and the mighty building at last stands outlined against the dying twilight as if etched there with a fiery burin. As the sky darkens into intense blue behind it, the material part of the basilica seems to vanish, until nothing is left to the eye but a wondrous, magical, visionary structure of fire. This is the silver illumination : watch it well, for it does not last long. At the first hour of night, when the bells sound all over Rome, a sudden change takes place. From the lofty cross a burst of flame is seen, and instantly a flash of light whirls

over the dome and drum, climbs the smaller cupolas, descends like a rain of fire down the columns of the *façade*, and before the great bell of St. Peter's has ceased to toll twelve peals, the golden illumination has succeeded to the silver. For my own part, I prefer the first illumination; it is more delicate, airy, and refined, though the second is more brilliant and dazzling. One is like the Bride of the Church, the other like the Empress of the World. In the second lighting the Church becomes more material, the flames are like jewels, and the dome seems a gigantic triple crown of St. Peter's. One effect, however, is very striking. The outline of fire, which before was firm and motionless, now wavers and shakes as if it would pass away, as the wind blows the flames back and forth from the great cups by which it is lighted. From near and far the world looks on,—from the Piazza beneath, where carriages drive to and fro in its splendour, and the band plays, and the bells toll,—from the windows and *loggias* of the city, wherever a view can be caught of this superb spectacle,—and from the Campagna and mountain towns, where, far away, alone and towering above everything, the dome is seen to blaze. Everywhere are ejaculations of delight, and thousands of groups are playing the game of "What is it like?" One says it is like a hive covered by a swarm of burning bees; others, that it is the enchanted palace in the gardens of Gul in the depths of the Arabian nights,—like a gigantic tiara set with wonderful diamonds, larger than those which Sinbad found in the roc's valley,—like the palace of the fairies in the dreams of childhood,—like the stately pleasure dome of Kubla Khan in Xanadu,—and twenty other whimsical things. At nearly midnight, ere we go to bed, we take a last look at it. It is a ruin, like the Colosseum,—great gaps of darkness are there, with broken rows of splendour. The lights are gone on one side the dome,—they straggle fitfully here and there down the other and

over the *facade*, fading even as we look. It is melancholy enough. It is a bankrupt heiress, an old and wrinkled beauty, that tells strange tales of her former wealth and charms, when the world was at her feet. It is the broken-down poet in the madhouse,—with flashes of wild fancies still glaring here and there amid the sad ruin of his thoughts. It is the once mighty Catholic Church, crumbling away with the passage of the night,—and when morning and light come it will be no more.



CHAPTER VI.

GAMES IN ROME.

WALKING, during pleasant weather, almost anywhere in Rome, but especially in passing through the enormous arches of the Temple of Peace, or along by the Colosseum, or some wayside *osteria* outside the city-walls, the ear of the traveller is often saluted by the loud, explosive tones of two voices going off together, at little intervals, like a brace of pistol-shots; and turning round to seek the cause of these strange sounds, he will see two men, in a very excited state, shouting, as they fling out their hands at each other with violent gesticulation. Ten to one he will say to himself, if he be a stranger in Rome, "How quarrelsome and passionate these Italians are!" If he be an Englishman or an American, he will be sure to congratulate himself on the superiority of his own countrymen, and wonder why these fellows stand there shaking their fists at each other, and screaming, instead of fighting it out like men,—and muttering, "A cowardly pack, too!" will pass on, perfectly satisfied with his facts and his philosophy. But what he has seen is really not a quarrel. It is simply the game of *Morra*, as old as the Pyramids, and formerly played among the hosts of Pharaoh and the armies of Cæsar as now by the subjects of Pius IX. It is thus played.

Two persons place themselves opposite each other, holding their right hands closed before them. They then simul-

taneously and with a sudden gesture throw out their hands, some of the fingers being extended, and others shut up on the palm,—each calling out in a loud voice, at the same moment, the number he guesses the fingers extended by himself and his adversary to make. If neither cry out aright, or if both cry out aright, nothing is gained or lost; but if only one guess the true number he wins a point. Thus, if one throw out four and the other two, he who cries out six makes a point, unless the other cry out the same number. The points are generally five, though sometimes they are doubled; and as they are made they are marked by the left hand, which, during the whole game, is held stiffly in the air at about the shoulders' height, one finger being extended for every point. When the *partito* is won, the winner cries out "*Fatto!*" or "*Guadagnato!*" or "*Vinto!*" or else strikes his hands across each other in sign of triumph. This last sign is also used when Double *Morra* is played, to indicate that five points are made.

So universal is this game in Rome, that the very beggars play away their earnings at it. It was only yesterday, as I came out of the gallery of the Capitol, that I saw two who had stopped screaming for "*baiocchi per amor di Dio,*" to play pauls against each other at *Morra*. One, a cripple, supported himself against a column, and the other, with his ragged cloak slung on his shoulder, stood opposite him. They staked a paul each time with the utmost *nonchalance*, and played with an earnestness and rapidity which showed that they were old hands at it, while the coachmen from their boxes cracked their whips, and jeered and joked them, and the shabby circle around them cheered them on. I stopped to see the result, and found that the cripple won two successive games. But his cloaked antagonist bore his losses like a hero; and when all was over he did his best with the strangers issuing from the Capitol to line his pockets for a new chance.

Nothing is more simple and apparently easy than *Morra*, yet to play it well requires quickness of perception and readiness in the calculation of chances. As each player, of course, knows how many fingers he himself throws out, the main point is to guess the number of fingers thrown by his opponent, and to add the two instantaneously together. A player of skill will soon detect the favourite numbers of his antagonist; and it is curious to see how remarkably clever some of them are in divining, from the movement of the hand, the number to be thrown. The game is always played with great vivacity, the hands being flung out with vehemence, and the numbers shouted at the full pitch of the voice, so as to be heard at a considerable distance. It is from the sudden opening of the fingers, while the hands are in the air, that the old Roman phrase, *micare digitis*, "to flash with the fingers," is derived.

A bottle of wine is generally the stake; and round the *osterias*, of a *fiesta*-day, when the game is played after the blood has been heated and the nerves strained by previous potations, the regular volleyed explosions of "*Tre! Cinque! Otto! Tutti!*" are often interrupted by hot discussions. But these are generally settled peacefully by the bystanders, who act as umpires,—and the excitement goes off in talk. The question arises almost invariably upon the number of fingers flashed out; for an unscrupulous player has great opportunities of cheating, by holding a finger half extended, so as to be able to close or open it afterwards according to circumstances; but sometimes the losing party will dispute as to the number called out. The thumb is the father of all evil at *Morra*, it being often impossible to say whether it was intended to be closed or not, and an unskilful player is easily deceived in this matter by a clever one. When "*Tutti*" is called, all the fingers, thumb and all, must be extended, and then it is an even chance that a discussion will take place as to whether the thumb was out. Sometimes,

when the blood is hot, and one of the parties has been losing, violent quarrels will arise, which the umpires cannot decide; and, in very rare cases, knives are drawn and blood is spilled. Generally these disputes end in nothing; and, often as I have seen this game, I have never been a spectator of any quarrel, though discussions numberless I have heard. But beyond vague stories by foreigners, in which I put no confidence, the vivacity of the Italians easily leading persons unacquainted with their characters to mistake a very peaceable talk for a violent quarrel, I know of only one case that ended tragically. There a savage quarrel, begun at *Morra*, was with difficulty pacified by the bystanders, and one of the parties withdrew to an *osteria* to drink with his companions. But while he was there, the rage which had been smothered, but not extinguished, in the breast of his antagonist, blazed out anew. Rushing at the other, as he sat by the table of the *osteria*, he attacked him fiercely with his knife. The friends of both started at once to their feet, to interpose and tear them apart; but before they could reach them one of the combatants dropped bleeding and dying on the floor, and the other fled like a maniac from the room.

This readiness of the Italians to use the knife for the settlement of every dispute, is generally attributed by foreigners to the passionateness of their nature; but I am inclined to believe that it also results from their entire distrust of the possibility of legal redress in the courts. Where courts are organized as they were in Naples, who but a fool would trust to them? Open tribunals, where justice is impartially administered, would soon check private assassinations; and were there more honest and efficient police-courts, there would be far fewer knives drawn. The Englishman invokes the aid of the law, knowing that he can count upon prompt justice; take that belief from him, he, too, like Harry Gow, would "fight for his own hand." In the half-organized

society of the less civilised parts of the United States, the pistol and bowie-knife are as frequent arbiters of disputes as the stiletto is among the Italians. But it would be a gross error to argue from this that the Americans are violent and passionate by nature ; for, among the same people in the older States, where justice is cheaply and strictly administered, the pistol and bowie-knife are almost unknown. Despotism and slavery nurse the passions of men ; and wherever law is loose, or courts are venal, public justice assumes the shape of private vengeance. The farther south one goes in Italy, the more frequent is violence and the more unrepressed are the passions. Compare Piedmont with Naples and Sicily, and the difference is immense. The dregs of vice and violence settle to the south.

But to return to *Morra*. As I was walking out beyond the Porta San Giovanni the other day, I heard the most ingenious and consolatory periphrasis for a defeat that it was ever my good fortune to hear ; and, as it shows the peculiar humour of the Romans, it may here have a place. Two of a party of *contadini* had been playing at *Morra*, the stakes being as usual, a bottle of wine, and each, in turn, had lost and won. A lively and jocose discussion now arose between the friends on the one side and the players on the other,—the former claiming that each of the latter was to pay his bottle of wine for the game he lost (to be drunk, of course, by all), and the latter insisting that, as one loss offset the other, nothing was to be paid by either. As I passed, one of the players was speaking. “*Il primo partito,*” he said, “*ho guadagnato io ; e poi, nel secondo,*”—here a pause,—“*ho perso la vittoria.*” “The first game, I won ; the second I—*lost the victory.*” And with this happy periphrasis our friend admitted his defeat. I could not but think how much better it would have been for the French, if this ingenious mode of adjusting with the English the Battle of Waterloo had ever occurred to them. To admit that they

were defeated was of course impossible ; but to acknowledge that they “lost the victory” would by no means have been humiliating. This would have soothed their irritable national vanity, prevented many heart-burnings, saved long and idle arguments and terrible “kicking against the pricks,” and rendered a friendly alliance possible.

No game has a better pedigree than *Morra*. It was played by the Egyptians more than two thousand years before the Christian era. In the paintings at Thebes and in the temples of Beni-Hassan seated figures may be seen playing it,—some keeping their reckoning with the left hand uplifted,—some striking off the game with both hands, to show that it was won,—and, in a word, using the same gestures as the modern Romans. From Egypt it was introduced into Greece. The Romans brought it from Greece at an early period, and it has existed among them ever since, having suffered apparently no alteration. Its ancient Roman name was *Micatio*, and to play it was called *micare digitis*—(to flash with the fingers),—the modern name *Morra* being merely a corruption of the verb *micare*. Varro describes it precisely as it is now played ; and Cicero, in the first book of his treatise “*De Divinatione*,” thus alludes to it :—“*Quid enim est sors ? Idem propemodum quod micare, quod talos jacere, quod tesseras ; quibus in rebus temeritas et casus, non ratio et consilium valent.*” So common was it, that it became the basis of an admirable proverb, to denote the honesty of a person :—“*Dignus est quicum in tenebris mices.*”—“So trustworthy, that one may play *Morra* with him in the dark.” At one period they carried their love of it so far, that they used to settle by *micatio* the sales of merchandise and meat in the Forum, until Apronius, prefect of the city, prohibited the practice in the following terms, as appears by an old inscription, which is particularly interesting as containing an admirable pun :—“*Sub exagio potius pecora vendere quam digitis concludentibus tradere.*”—

“Sell your sheep by the balance, and do not bargain or deceive” (*tradere* having both these meanings) “by opening and shutting your fingers at *Morra*.”

One of the various kinds of the old Roman game of *Pila* still survives under the modern name of *Pallone*. It is played between two sides, each numbering from five to eight persons. Each of the players is armed with a *bracciale*, or gauntlet of wood, covering the hand and extending nearly up to the elbow, with which a heavy ball is beaten backwards and forwards, high into the air, from one side to the other. The object of the game is to keep the ball in constant flight, and whoever suffers it to fall dead within his bounds loses. It may, however, be struck in its rebound, though the best strokes are before it touches the ground. The gauntlets are hollow tubes of wood, thickly studded outside with pointed bosses, projecting an inch and a half, and having inside, across the end, a transverse bar, which is grasped by the hand, so as to render them manageable to the wearer. The balls, which are of the size of a large cricket-ball, are made of leather, and so heavy, that, when well played, they are capable of breaking the arm unless properly received on the gauntlet. They are inflated with air, which is pumped into them with a long syringe, through a small aperture closed by a valve inside. The game is played on an oblong figure marked out on the ground, or designated by the wall around the sunken platform on which it is played; and across the centre is drawn a transverse line, dividing equally the two sides. Whenever a ball either falls outside the lateral boundary, or is not struck over the central line, it counts against the party playing it. When it flies over the extreme limits it is called a *volata*, and is reckoned the best stroke that can be made. At the end of the lists is a spring-board, on which the principal player stands. The best batter is always selected for this post; the others are

distributed about. Near him stands the *ballonaio*, whose office is to keep the balls well inflated with air, and he is busy nearly all the time. Facing him, at a short distance, is the *mandarino*, who gives ball. As soon as the ball leaves the *mandarino's* hand, the chief batter runs forward to meet it, and strikes it as far and high as he can with the gauntlet. Four times in succession have I seen a good player strike a *volata*, with the loud applause of the spectators. When this does not occur, the two sides bat the ball backwards and forwards, from one to the other, sometimes fifteen or twenty times before the point is won; and as it falls here and there, now flying high in the air, and caught at once on the gauntlet before touching the ground, now glancing back from the wall, which generally forms one side of the lists, the players rush eagerly to hit it, calling loudly to each other, and often displaying great agility, skill, and strength. The interest now becomes very exciting; the bystanders shout when a good stroke is made, and groan and hiss at a miss, until finally the ball is struck over the lists or lost within them. The points of the game are fifty,—the first two strokes counting fifteen each, and the others ten each. When one side makes the fifty before the other has made anything, it is called a *marcio*, and counts double. As each point is made, it is shouted by the caller, who stands in the middle and keeps the count, and proclaims the bets of the spectators.

This game is as national to the Italians as cricket to the English; it is not only, as it seems to me, much more interesting than the latter, but requires vastly more strength, agility, and dexterity, to play it well. The Italians give themselves to it with all the enthusiasm of their nature, and many a young fellow injures himself for life by the fierceness of his batting. After the excitement and stir of this game, which only the young and athletic can play well, cricket seems a dull affair.

The game of *Pallone* has always been a favourite in

Rome ; and near the summit of the Quattro Fontane, in the Barberini grounds, is a circus, which used to be specially devoted to public exhibitions during the summer afternoons. At these representations the most renowned players were engaged by an *impresario*. The audience was generally large, and the entrance fee was one *paul*. Wonderful feats were sometimes performed here ; and on the wall are marked the heights of some remarkable *volate*. The players were clothed in a thin, tight dress, like mountebanks. One side wore a blue, and the other a red ribbon on the arm. The contests, generally, were fiercely disputed,—the spectators betting heavily, and shouting, as good or bad strokes were made. Sometimes a line was extended across the amphitheatre, from wall to wall, over which it was necessary to strike the ball, a point being lost in case it passed below. But this is a variation from the game as ordinarily played, and can be ventured on only by the most skilful players. The games here, however, are now suspended ; for the French, since their occupation, have not only seized the post-office, to convert it into a club-room, and the *piano nobile* of some of the richest palaces, to serve as barracks for their soldiers, but have also driven the Romans from their amphithéâtre, where *Pallone* was played, to make it into *ateliers de génie*. Still, one may see the game played by ordinary players, towards the twilight of any summer day, in the Piazza di Termini, or near the Tempio della Pace, or the Colosseo. The boys from the studios and shops also play in the streets a sort of mongrel game called *Pillotta*, beating a small ball back and forth, with a round bat, shaped like a small *tamburello* and covered with parchment. But the real game, played by skilful players, may be seen almost every summer night outside the Porta a Pinti, in Florence ; and I have also seen it admirably played under the fortress-wall at Siena, the players being dressed entirely in white, with loose ruffled jackets, breeches, long stockings, and shoes

of undressed leather, and the spectators sitting round on the stone benches, or leaning over the lofty wall, cheering on the game, while they ate the cherries or *zucca*-seeds which were hawked about among them by itinerant pedlars. Here, towards twilight, one could lounge away an hour pleasantly under the shadow of the fortress, looking now at the game and now at the rolling country beyond, where olives and long battalions of vines marched knee-deep through the golden grain, until the purple splendours of sunset had ceased to transfigure the distant hills, and the crickets chirped louder under the deepening gray of the sky.

In the walls of the amphitheatre at Florence is a bust in coloured marble of one of the most famous players of his day, whose battered face seems still to preside over the game, getting now and then a smart blow from the *Pallone* itself, which, in its inflation, is no respecter of persons. The honourable inscription beneath the bust, celebrating the powers of this champion, who rejoiced in the surname of Earthquake, is as follows :—

“*Josephus Barnius, Petiolensis, vir in jactando repercutiendoque folle singularis, qui ob robur ingens maximamque artis peritiam, et collusores ubique devictos, Terræmotus formidabili cognomento dictus est.*”

Another favourite game of ball among the Romans is *Bocce* or *Bocette*. It is played between two sides, consisting of any number of persons, each of whom has two large wooden balls of about the size of an average American nine-pin ball. Besides these, there is a little ball called the *lecco*. This is rolled first by one of the winning party to any distance he pleases, and the object is to roll or pitch the *bocette* or large balls so as to place them beside the *lecco*. Every ball of one side nearer to the *lecco* than any ball of the other counts one point in the game—the number of points depending on the agreement of the parties. The game is

played on the ground, and not upon any smooth or prepared plane ; and as the *lecco* often runs into hollows, or poises itself on some uneven declivity, it is sometimes a matter of no small difficulty to play the other balls near to it. The great skill of the game consists, however, in displacing the balls of the adverse party so as to make the balls of the playing party count, and a clever player will often change the whole aspect of affairs by one well-directed throw. The balls are thrown alternately,—first by a player on one side, and then by a player on the other. As the game advances, the interest increases, and there is a constant variety. However good a throw is made, it may be ruined by the next. Sometimes the ball is pitched with great accuracy, so as to strike a close-counting ball far into the distance, while the new ball takes its place. Sometimes the *lecco* itself is suddenly transplanted into a new position, which entirely reverses all the previous counting. It is the last ball which decides the game, and of course it is eagerly watched. In the Piazza di Termini numerous parties may be seen every bright day in summer or spring playing this game under the locust-trees*, surrounded by idlers, who stand by to approve or condemn, and to give their advice. The French soldiers, free from drill or guard, or from practising trumpet-calls on the old Agger of Servius Tullius near by, are sure to be rolling balls in this fascinating game. Having heated their blood sufficiently at it, they adjourn to a little *osteria* in the Piazzo to refresh themselves with a glass of *asciutto* wine, after which they sit on a bench outside the door, or stretch themselves under the trees and take a *siesta*, with their handkerchiefs over their eyes, while other parties take their turn at the *bocce*. Meanwhile, from the Agger beyond are heard the distressing trumpets struggling with false notes and wheezing and shrieking in ludicrous discord, while now and then the solemn bell of Santa Maria Maggiore tolls from the neighbouring hill.

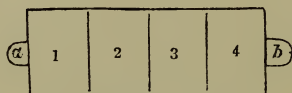
Another favourite game in Rome and Tuscany is *Ruzzola*, so called from the circular disk of wood with which it is played. Round this the player winds tightly a cord, which, by a sudden jerk of the hand, he uncoils so as to send the disk whirling along the road. Outside the walls, and along all the principal avenues leading to the city, parties are constantly to be met playing at this game; and oftentimes before the players are visible the disk is seen bounding round some curve, to the great danger of one's legs. He whose disk whirls the farthest wins a point. It is an excellent walking game, and it requires some knack to play the disk evenly along the road. Often the swiftest disks, when not well directed, bound over the hedges, knock themselves down against the walls, or bury themselves in the tangled ditches; and when well played, if they chance to hit a stone in the road, they will leap wildly into the air, at the risk of serious injury to any unfortunate passer. In the country, instead of wooden disks, the *contadini* often use *cacio di capra*, a kind of hard goat's cheese, whose rind will resist the roughest play. What, then, must be the digestive powers of those who eat it, may be imagined. Like the peptic countryman, they probably do not know they have a stomach, not having ever felt it; and certainly they can say with Tony Lumpkin, "It never hurts me, and I sleep like a hound after it."

In common with the French, the Romans have a passion for the game of *Dominos*. Every *caffè* is supplied with a number of boxes, and, in the evening especially, it is played by young and old, with a seriousness which strikes us Saxons with surprise. We generally have a contempt for this game, and look upon it as childish. But I know not why. It is by no means easy to play well, and requires a careful memory and quick powers of combination and calculation. No *caffè* in Rome or Marseilles would be complete without its little black and white counters; and as it interests at

once the most mercurial and fidgety of people and the laziest and languidest, it must have some hidden charm as yet unrevealed to the Anglo-Saxon.

Besides Dominos, Chess (*Scacchi*) is often played in public in the *caffès*; and there is one *caffè* named *Dei Scacchi*, because it is frequented by the best chess-players in Rome. Here matches are often made, and admirable games are played.

Among the Roman boys the game of *Campana* is also common. A parallelogram is drawn upon the ground and subdivided into four squares, which are numbered. At the top and bottom are two small semicircles, or *bells*, thus:—



Each of the players, having deposited his stake in the semicircle (*b*) at the farthest end, takes his station at a short distance, and endeavours to pitch some object, either a disk or a bit of *terra-cotta*, or more generally a *baiocco*, into one of the compartments. If he lodge it in the nearest bell (*a*), he pays a new stake into the pool; if into the farthest bell (*b*), he takes the whole pool; if into either of the other compartments, he takes one, two, three, or four of the stakes, according to the number of the compartment. If he lodge on a line, he is *abbrucciato*, as it is termed, and his play goes for nothing. Among the boys the pool is frequently filled with buttons,—among the men, with *baiocchi*; but buttons or *baiocchi* are all the same to the players,—they are the representatives of luck or skill.

Still another and very common game in Rome, which is worthy of notice here simply because of its ancient pedigree, is a game played with walnuts. Four or five of these are piled pyramidally together, when the players, withdrawing to a

short distance, pitch another walnut at them, and he who succeeds in striking and dispersing the heap, wins. This is manifestly the game played by the little boys of ancient Rome, and alluded to by the author of the “Nux Elegia :”—

“Quatuor in nucibus non amplius alea toto est
Cum tibi suppositus additur una tribus.”*

But the game of games in Rome is the Lottery. This is under the direction of the government, which, with a truly ecclesiastical regard for its subjects, has organised it into a means of raising revenue. The financial objection to this method of taxation is that its hardest pressure is upon the poorest classes ; but the moral and political objections are still stronger. The habit of gambling engendered by it ruins the temper, depraves the morals, and keeps up a constant state of excitement at variance with any settled and serious occupation. The temptations to laziness which it offers are too great for any people luxurious or idle by temperament ; and the demon of Luck is set upon the altar which should be dedicated to Industry. If one happy chance can bring a fortune, who will spend laborious days to gain a competence ? The common classes in Rome are those who are most corrupted by the lottery ; and when they can neither earn nor borrow *baiocchi* to play, they strive to obtain them by beggary, cheating, and sometimes by theft. The fallacious hope that their ticket will some day bring a prize leads them from step to step, until, having emptied their purses, they are tempted to raise the necessary funds by any unjustifiable means. When you pay them their wages or throw them a *buona-mano*, they instantly run to the lottery office to play it. Loss after loss does not discourage them. It is always “The next time they are to win,—there

* In stakes of nuts the gambling boys agree,
Three placed below, a fourth to crown the three.

was a slight mistake in their calculation before." Some good reason or other is always at hand. If by chance one of them does happen to win a large sum, it is ten to one that it will cost him his life,—that he will fall into a fit, or drop in an apoplexy, on hearing the news. There is a most melancholy instance of this in the very next house,—of a Jew made suddenly and unexpectedly rich, who instantly became insane in consequence, and is now the most wretched and melancholy spectacle that man can ever become,—starving in the midst of abundance, and moving like a beast about his house. But of all ill luck that can happen to the lottery-gambler, the worst is to win a small prize. It is all over with him from that time forward; into the great pit of the lottery everything that he can lay his hands on is sure to go.

There has been some difference of opinion as to whether the lottery was of later Italian invention, or dated back to the Roman Empire,—some even contending that it was in existence in Egypt long before that period; and several ingenious discussions may be found on this subject in the journals and annals of the French *savans*. A strong claim has been put forward for the ancient Romans, on the ground that Nero, Titus, and Heliogabalus were in the habit of writing on bits of wood and shells the names of various articles which they intended to distribute, and then casting them to the crowd to be scrambled for.* On some of these shells and billets were inscribed the names of slaves, precious vases, costly dresses, articles of silver and gold, valuable beasts, etc., which became the property of the fortunate persons who secured the billets and shells. On others were written absurd and useless articles, which turned the laugh against the unfortunate finder. Some, for instance, had inscribed upon them ten pieces of gold, and some ten cabbages. Some were for one hundred bears, and some for one egg. Some for five camels, and some for

* See Dessault, *Traité de la Passion du Jeu*.

ten flies. In one sense these were lotteries, and the Emperors deserve all due credit for their invention. But the lottery, according to its modern signification, is of Italian origin, and had its birth in Upper Italy as early as the fourteenth or fifteenth century. Here it was principally practised by the Venetians and Genoese, under the name of *Borsa di Ventura*,—the prizes consisting originally, not of money, but of merchandise of every kind, precious stones, pictures, gold and silver work, and similar articles. The great difference between them and the ancient lotteries of Heliogabalus and Nero was, that tickets were bought and prizes drawn. The lottery soon came to be played, however, for money, and was considered so admirable an invention, that it was early imported into France, where Francis I., in 1539, granted letters-patent for the establishment of one. In the seventeenth century, this "*infezione*," as an old Italian writer calls it, was introduced into Holland and England, and at a still later date into Germany. Those who invented it still retain it; but those who adopted it have rejected it. After nearly three centuries' existence in France, it was abolished on the 31st of December, 1835. The last drawing was at Paris, on the 27th of the same month, when the number of players was so great that it became necessary to close the offices before the appointed time, and one Englishman is said to have gained a *quaterno* of the sum of one million two hundred thousand francs. When abolished in France, the government was drawing from it a net revenue of twenty millions of francs.

In Italy the lottery was proscribed by Innocent XII., Benedict XIII., and Clement XII. But it was soon revived. It was not without vehement opposers then as now, as may be seen by a little work published at Pisa in the early part of the last century, entitled, "*L'Inganno non conosciuto, oppure non voluto conoscere, nell' Estrazione dell Lotto.*" Muratori, in 1696, calls it, in his "Annals of

Italy," "*Inventione dell' amara malizia per succiare il sangue dei malaccorti giuocatori.*" In a late number of the "Civiltà Cattolica," published at Rome by the Jesuits (the motto of which is "*Beatus Populus cujus Dominus Deus est*"), there is, on the other hand, an elaborate and most Jesuitical article, in which the lottery is defended with amusing skill. What Christendom in general has agreed to consider immoral and pernicious in its effects on a people, seems, on the contrary, to the writer of this article, to be highly moral and commendable.

The numbers which can be played are from one to ninety. Of these only five are now drawn. Originally the numbers drawn were eight (*otto*)—and it is said that the Italian name of this game, *lotto*, was derived from this circumstance. The player may stake upon one, two, three, four, or five numbers,—but no ticket can be taken for more than five; and he may stake upon his ticket any sum, from one *baiocco* up to five *scudi*,—but the latter sum only in case he play upon several chances on the same ticket. If he play one number, he may either play it *al posto assegnato*, according to its place in the drawing, as first, second, third, etc.—or he may play it *senza posto*, without place, in which case he wins if the number come anywhere among the five drawn. In the latter case, however, the prize is much less in proportion to the sum staked. Thus, for one *baiocco* staked *al posto assegnato*, a *scudo* may be won; but to gain a *scudo* on a number *senza posto*, seven *baiocchi* must be played. A sum staked upon two numbers is called an *ambo*,—on three, a *terno*,—on four, a *quaterno*,—and on five, a *cinquino*; and of course the prizes increase in rapid proportion to the numbers played,—the sum gained multiplying very largely on each additional number. For instance, if two *baiocchi* be staked on an *ambo*, the prize is one *scudo*; but if the same sum be staked on a *terno*, the prize is a hundred *scudi*. When an *ambo* is played for, the same two numbers may be

played as single numbers, either *al posto* or *senza posto*, and in such case one of the numbers alone may win. So, also, a *terno* may be played so as to include an *ambo*, and a *quaterno* so as to include a *terno* and *ambo*, and a *cinquino* so as to include all. But whenever more than one chance is played for the price is proportionally increased. For a simple *terno* the limit of price is thirty-five pauls. The ordinary rule is to play for every chance within the numbers taken; but the common people rarely attempt more than a *terno*. If four numbers are played with all their chances, they are reckoned as four *terni*, and paid for accordingly. If five numbers are taken, the price is for five *terni*.

Where two numbers are played, there is always an augment to the nominal prize of twenty per cent.; where three numbers are played, the augment is of eighty per cent.; and from every prize is deducted ten per cent., to be devoted to the hospitals and the poor. The rule creating the augments was decreed by Innocent XIII. Such is the rage for the lottery in Rome, as well as in all the Italian States, and so great is the number of tickets bought within the year, that this tax on the prizes brings in a very considerable revenue for eleemosynary purposes.

The lottery is a branch of the department of finance, and is under the direction of a Monsignore. The tickets originally issue from one grand central office in the Palazzo Madama; but there is scarcely a street in Rome without some subsidiary and distributing office, which is easily recognised, not only by its great sign of "*Prenditoria di Lotti*" over the door, but by scores of boards set round the windows and doorway, on which are displayed, in large figures, hundreds of combinations of numbers for sale. The large show of placards would to a stranger indicate a very considerable investment; yet, in point of fact, as the tickets rarely cost more than a few *baiocchi*, the amount risked is

small. No ticket is available for a prize unless it bear the stamp and signature of the central office, as well as of the distributing shop, if bought in the latter.

Every Saturday, at noon, the lottery is drawn in Rome, in the Piazza Madama. Half an hour before the appointed time, the Piazza begins to be thronged with ticket-holders, who eagerly watch a large balcony of the sombre old Palazzo Madama (built by the infamous Catherine de' Medici), where the drawing is to take place. This is covered by an awning and coloured draperies. In front, and fastened to the balustrade, is a glass barrel, standing on thin brass legs and turned by a handle. Five or six persons are in the balcony, making arrangements for the drawing. These are the officials,—one of them being the government officer, and the others persons taken at random, to supervise the proceedings. The chief official first takes from the table beside him a slip of paper on which a number is inscribed. He names it aloud, passes it to the next, who verifies it and passes it on, until it has been subjected to the examination of all. The last person then proclaims the number in a loud voice to the populace below, folds it up, and drops it into the glass barrel. This operation is repeated until every number from one to ninety is passed, verified by all, proclaimed, folded, and dropped into the barrel. The last number is rather sung than called, and with more ceremony than all the rest. The crowd shout back from below. The bell strikes noon. A blast of trumpets sounds from the balcony, and a boy dressed in white robes advances from within, ascends the steps, and stands high up before the people, facing the Piazza. The barrel is then whirled rapidly round and round, so as to mix in inextricable confusion all the tickets. This over, the boy lifts high his right hand, makes the sign of the cross on his breast, then waving his open hand in the air, to show that nothing is concealed, plunges it into the barrel, and draws out a number. This he hands

to the official, who names it, and passes it along the line of his companions. There is a dead silence below, all listening eagerly. Then, in a loud voice, the number is sung out by the last official, "*Primo estratto, numero 14,*" or whatever the number may be. Then sound the trumpets again, and there is a rustle and buzz among the crowd. All the five numbers are drawn with like ceremony, and then all is over. Within a surprisingly short space of time, these numbers are exhibited in the long frames which are to be seen over the door of every *Prenditoria di Lotti* in Rome, and there they remain until the next drawing takes place. The boy who does the drawing belongs to a college of orphans, an admirable institution, at which children who have lost both parents and are left helpless are lodged, cared for, and educated, and the members of which are employed to perform this office in rotation, receiving therefor a few *scudi*.

It will be seen from the manner in which the drawing of the lottery is conducted, that no precaution is spared by the government to assure the public of the perfect good faith and fairness observed in it. This is, in fact, absolutely necessary in order to establish that confidence without which its very object would be frustrated. But the Italians are a very suspicious and jealous people; and I fear that there is less faith in the uprightness of the government than in their own watchfulness and the difficulty of deception. There can be little doubt that no deceit is practised by the government so far as the drawing is concerned,—for it would be nearly impossible to employ it. Still there are not wanting stories of fortunate coincidences which are singular and interesting. One case, which I have every reason to believe authentic, was related to me by a most trustworthy person, as being within his own knowledge. A few years ago, the Monsignore who was at the head of the lottery had occasion to diminish his household, and accordingly dismissed an old servant who had been long in his palace.

Often the old man returned and asked for relief, and as often was charitably received. But his visits at last became importunate, and the Monsignore remonstrated. The answer of the servant was, "I have given my best years to the service of your Eminence,—I am too old to labour,—what shall I do?" The case was a hard one. His Eminence paused and reflected,—at last he said, "Why not buy a ticket in the lottery?" "Ah!" was the answer, "I have not even money to supply my daily needs. What you now give me is all I have. If I risk it, I may lose it,—and that lost, what can I do?" Still the Monsignore said, "Buy a ticket in the lottery." "Since your eminence commands me, I will," said the old man; "but what numbers?" "Play on number so and so for the first drawing," was the answer, "and God bless you!" The servant did as he was ordered, and, to his surprise and joy, the first number drawn was his. He was a rich man for life,—and his Eminence lost a troublesome dependant.

A capital story is told by the author of the article in the "Civiltà Cattolica," which is to the point here, and which, even were it not told on such respectable authority, bears its truth on the face of it. As very frequently happens, a poor shopkeeper, being hard-driven by his creditors, went to his priest, an *uomo apostolico*, and prayed him earnestly to give him three numbers to play in the lottery.

"But how under heaven," says the innocent priest, "has it ever got into your head that I can know the five numbers which are to issue in the lottery?"

"*Eh! Padre mio!* what will it cost you?" was the answer. "Just look at me and my wretched family; if we do not pay our rent on Saturday, out we go into the street. There is nothing left but the lottery, and you can give us the three numbers that will set all right."

"Oh, there you are again! I am ready to do all I can to assist you, but this matter of the lottery is impossible;

and I must say, that your folly, in supposing I can give you the three lucky numbers, does little credit to your brains."

"Oh, no! no! do not say so, *Padre mio!* Give me a *terno*. It will be like rain in May, or cheese on my macaroni. On my word of honour, I'll keep it secret. *Via!* You, so good and charitable, cannot refuse me the three numbers. Pray content me this once."

"My son, I will give you a rule for always being content:—Avoid Sin, think often on Death, and behave so as to deserve Paradise,—and so"——

"*Basta! basta! Padre mio!* That's enough. Thanks! thanks! God will reward you."

And, making a profound reverence, off the *bottegaio* rushes to his house. There he takes down the "*Libro dei Sogni*," calls into consultation his wife and children, and, after a long and earnest discussion and study, the three numbers corresponding to the terms Sin, Death, and Paradise, are settled upon, and away goes our friend to play them in the lottery. Will you believe it?—the three numbers are drawn,—and the joy of the poor *bottegaio* and his family may well be imagined. But what you will not imagine is the persecution of the poor *uomo apostolico* which followed. The secret was all over the town the next day, and he was beset with applicants for numbers. Vainly he protested, declaring that he knew nothing about it, and that the man's drawing the right numbers was all chance. Every word he said turned into numbers, and off ran his hearers to play them. He was like the girl in the fairy story, who dropped pearls every time she spoke. The worst of the *imbroglio* was, that in an hour the good priest had uttered words equivalent to all the ninety numbers in the lottery, and the players were all at loggerheads with each other. Nor did this persecution cease for weeks,—until those who had played the numbers corresponding to his words found themselves, as the Italians say, with only flies in their hands.

The stupidity of many of the common people in regard to these numbers is wonderful. When the number drawn is next to the number they have, they console themselves by thinking that they were within one of it,—as if in such cases a miss were not as bad as a mile. But when the number drawn is a multiple of the one they play, it is a sympathetic number, and is next door to winning; and if the number come reversed,—as if, having played 12, it come out 21,—he laughs with delight. “Eh, don’t you see, you stupid fellow,” said the chemist of a village one day to a dunce of a peasant, of whose infallible *terno* not a single number had been drawn,—“Don’t you see, in substance all your three numbers have been drawn? and it’s shameful in you to be discontented. Here you have played 8—44—26, and instead of these have been drawn 7—11—62. Well! just observe! Your 8 is within only one point of being 7; your 44 is in substance 11, for 4 times 11 are 44 exactly; and your 26 is nothing more or less than precisely 62 reversed;—what would you ask more?” And by his own mode of reasoning, the poor peasant sees as clearly as possible that he has really won,—only the difficulty is that he cannot touch the prize without correcting the little variations. *Ma, pazienza!* he came so near this time, that he will be sure to win the next,—and away he goes to hunt out more sympathetic numbers, and to rejoice with his friends on coming so near winning.

Dreams of numbers are, of course, very frequent,—and are justly much prized. Yet one must know how to use them, and be brave and bold, or the opportunity is lost. I myself once dreamt of having gained a *terno* in the lottery, but was fool enough not to play it,—and in consequence lost a prize, the very numbers coming up in the next drawing. The next time I have such a dream, of course I shall play, but perhaps I shall be too late, and only lose. And this recalls to my mind a story, which may serve as a

warning to the timid and an encouragement to the bold. An Englishman, who had lived on bad terms with a very quarrelsome and annoying wife (according to his own account, of course), had finally the luck (I mean the misfortune) to lose her. He had lived long enough in Italy, however, to say "*Pazienza*," and buried his sorrows and his wife in the same grave. But after the lapse of some time, his wife appeared to him in a dream, and confessed her sins towards him during her life, and prayed his forgiveness, and added, that in token of reconciliation, he must accept three numbers to play in the lottery, which would certainly win a great prize. But the husband was obstinate, and absolutely refused to follow the advice of a friend to whom he recounted the odd dream, and who urged him to play the numbers. "Bah!" he answered to this good counsel; "I know her too well!—she never meant well to me during her life, and I don't believe she's changed now that she's dead. She only means to play me a trick, and make me lose. But I'm too old a bird to be taken with her chaff." "Better play them," said his friend,—and they separated. In the course of a week they met again. "By-the-way," said the friend, "did you see that your three numbers came up in the lottery this morning?" "The Devil they did! What a consummate fool I was not to play them!" "You didn't play them?" "No!" "Well, I did, and won a good round sum with them, too." So the obstinate husband, mad at his ill-luck, cursed himself for a fool, and had his curses for his pains. That very night, however, his wife again appeared to him, and, though she reproached him a little for his want of faith in her (no woman could be expected to forego such an opportunity, even though she were dead), yet she forgave him, and added,—"Think no more about it now, for here are three more numbers, just as good." The husband, who had eaten the bitter food of experience, was determined at all events not to let his fortune slip again through his fingers,

and played the highest possible *terno* in the lottery, and waited anxiously for the next drawing. He could scarcely eat his breakfast for nervousness that morning,—but at last mid-day sounded, and the drawing took place, but no one of his numbers came up. “Too late! taken in!” he cried. “Confound her! she knew me better than I knew myself. She gave me a prize the first time, because she knew I wouldn’t play it; and, having thus whetted my passions, she then gave me a blank the second time because she knew I would play it. I might have known better.”

From the moment one lottery is drawn, the mind of the people is intent on selecting numbers for the next. Nor is this an easy matter,—all sorts of superstitions existing as to figures and numbers. Some are lucky, some unlucky, in themselves,—some lucky only in certain combinations, and some sympathetic with others. The chances, therefore, must be carefully calculated, no number or combination being ever played without profound consideration, and under advice of skilful friends. Almost every event in life has a numerical signification; and such is the reverence paid to dreams, that a large book exists of several hundred pages, called “*Libro dei Sogni*,” containing, besides various cabala and mystical figures, and lists of numbers which are “sympathetic,” with directions for their use, a dictionary of thousands of objects, with the numbers supposed to be represented by each, as well as rules for interpreting into numbers all dreams in which these objects appear,—and this book is the constant *vade-mecum* of a true lottery-player. As Boniface lived, ate, and slept on his ale, so do the Romans on their numbers. They are scrawled over the ruins, on the shop doors, on the sides of the houses, and are given in the almanacks. The very children “lisp in numbers, for the numbers come,” and the fathers run immediately to play them. Accidents, executions, deaths, apoplexies, marriages, assassinations, births, anomalies of all kinds,

become auguries and enigmas of numbers. A lottery-gambler will count the stabs on a dead body, the drops of blood from a decollated head, the passengers in an overturned coach, the wrinkles in the forehead of a new-born child, the gasps of a person struck by apoplexy, the day of the month and the hour and the minute of his death, the *scudi* lost by a friend, the forks stolen by a thief, anything and everything, to play them in the lottery. If a strange dream is dreamed,—as of one being in a desert on a camel, which turns into a rat, and runs down into the Maelström to hide,—the “*Libro dei Sogni*” is at once consulted, the numbers for desert, rat, camel, and Maelström are found and combined, and the hopeful player waits in eager expectation of a prize. Of course, dream after dream of particular numbers and combinations occur,—for the mind bent to this subject plays freaks in the night, and repeats contortedly the thoughts of the day,—and these dreams are considered of special value. Sometimes, when a startling incident takes place with a special numerical signification, the run upon the numbers indicated becomes so great, that the government, which is always careful to guard against any losses on its own part, refuses to allow more than a certain amount to be played on them, cancels the rest, and returns the price of the tickets.

In the church of Sant Agostino, at Rome, there is a celebrated Madonna, usually supposed to be the work of Sansovino. It is in fact an antique group, probably representing Agrippina and the young Nero, which Sansovino with a few touches transformed into a Madonna and child. But since it has been newly baptized and received into the church it has acquired great celebrity for its miraculous powers,—and in consequence has received from the devout exceedingly rich presents of precious stones, valued at several thousands of dollars, which are hung upon its neck. A short time since the most valuable of these diamonds were missing; they had been stolen during the night; and

scandalous persons went so far as to attribute the theft to one of the priests. However this may be, the loss of these jewels made a great sensation in Rome, and was the chief subject of conversation for days, and as a matter of course, all the people rushed to the "Libro dei Sogni," sought out the numbers for Madonna, diamonds, and thief, and at once played them in the lottery; and, as luck would have it, these very numbers were drawn, to the great delight of the people if not of the government, which thus lost a large sum of money.

In these matters the modern Romans are the true descendants of their ancient ancestors, who took auguries from dreams, being of opinion that they were the messengers of the gods,—for, says Homer, dreams descend to us from Jove. They made lustrations to obtain favourable dreams with heated water taken from the river, and for the same purpose they sacrificed black sheep and laid themselves down to sleep upon the warm skin. Instead of the popular prejudice which now exists against telling one's dreams, they imagined, on the contrary, that the influence of ill-omened dreams could be counteracted by repeating them to the sun; and when Iphigenia dreamed that the palace in which she dwelt was to fall, she took this method to avert evil consequences. They also consulted old women who had acquired the reputation for divination to interpret their dreams, and were cleverer at their trade, let us hope, than the Jewesses of the Ghetto. The most celebrated in this art were the Telmissenses; and Lucian makes mention of one of this nation, a certain Aristander, who was the interpreter of dreams to Alexander the Great.

Many were the ancient authors who distinguished themselves in this science, and wrote treatises upon it. Tertullian, for instance, in his treatise "de Anima," mentions among others Antiphon, Strato, Philochorus, Serapion, Cratippus, Dionysius Rhodius, and Epicharmus, the last of whom

seems to have had the highest reputation of all as an interpreter of dreams. Besides these, Artemidorus mentions Geminius, Pirius, Demetrius Phalerius, and Artimon Milesius, the first of whom wrote three books on this subject, the second five books, and the third twenty-eight books,—and to these we must add Aristarchus and Hermippus, who was a pupil of Philo, and wrote five books on the interpretation of dreams. Of all these books, however, not one has been preserved; still we possess the works of some celebrated writers on this subject, among whom may be mentioned Artemidorus, Astrampsicus, Sinesius, Nicephorus, and Michael Paleologus. That of Artemidorus is especially curious; it is in five books, and contains an elaborate account of the general rules of interpretation of dreams, and of the particular significance of all sorts of dreams, as for instance, of dancing, fighting, hunting, fishing, and other active exercises; of planets, earthquakes, and physical phenomena; of the various gods; of the different parts of the body, and of birds, beasts, reptiles, insects, and even of matters and things relating to the toilette, and ornaments and portions of the dress. In his fifth book he enumerates no less than ninety-five actual dreams, with the true interpretation to be given of them, as well as of the events that followed them; and in one chapter he speaks of numbers as connected with dreams, though he merely alludes to this subject, and does not enter into any details.

According to Artemidorus, the ancients divided dreams into two classes—*somnia* and *insomnia*—the former being affections of the mind, and indicating future events, and the latter resulting from more material conditions of the body, and indicative of the past or present. Macrobius, however, in his work, “*In Somnium Scipionis*,” says there are five kinds of dreams, called by the Romans, *somnium*, *visio*, *oraculum*, and *visum* (or *phantasma*), the latter two being of no value in divination, as they resulted from anxiety or

over-labour. The somnium was the *ovēpos* of the Greeks which descended from the gods ; the vision was the appearance and return of a friend ; the oraculum was the announcement of some future event by a parent, a priest, or a god ; all of which forms of dream were possessed by Scipio. Macrobius also gives us a curious account of the symbolical meaning of numbers, which should be recommended to all who play in the lottery.

Though the Romans do not admit these distinctions, and are far behind their ancestors in all that relates to the philosophy of dreams, they have an equal faith in their value as indicative of fortune and misfortune ; and a Roman of the lower class, if he have a singular dream is sure at once to tell it to his friends, consult upon it, and finally play it in the lottery, they purchasing the same numbers as he ; and why not, if, as Tertullian assures us, “ Dreams we receive from God ”—and there be “ no man so foolish as never to have known any dreams come true ? ”

The following extract from Astrampsicus reads so like an extract from one of the almanacs in popular use in Rome, that it is almost impossible to believe it is not modern : “ Walking upon charcoal,” he says, “ presages an injury by your enemy ; whoever dreams he holds a bee in his hand will see his hopes frustrated ; moving slowly indicates calamitous voyages ; if you are glad in your mind, it is a sign that you should dwell in a foreign country ; the dream of stars is of good augury ; if you walk over earthenware vases, look out to avoid the plots your enemies are devising against you (is not this thoroughly Italian ?) ; the appearance of oxen threatens a misfortune ; eating grapes indicates that a great fall of rain is near ; thunder heard in dreams is the discourse of angels ; eating figs denotes vain talk ; seeing milk is an indication of placid habits, and shows that you will escape your enemies ; if you dream of yourself as being old, expect honours ; if you are naked, fear to lose your

possessions ; a bad odour is a sign of some annoyance." Whatever we may say as to most of these interpretations, the last we shall all agree to.

In this connection, it seems to me that I cannot conscientiously omit to state to all my Roman friends who draw auguries and numbers for the lottery from dreams, that a possible reason why they are so often deceived in their divinations may be found in the fact that they are too much given to the eating of beans. Apollonius Dyscolus, whose testimony on this subject can scarcely be impeached, declares solemnly that beans hinder the mind from the reception of true dreams, and rather open the way to those which are lying and false. And Diogenes Laertius, in his "Life of Pythagoras," says that this philosopher strictly prohibited his disciples from the use of beans for various very singular reasons. Cicero also declares that they prevent "that, tranquillity of mind which is necessary in investigating truth." And Aristotle, Pliny, and Dioscorides, agree that "whoever wishes to divine the future should strictly abstain from beans." Plutarch goes further, and says that the "heads of polypi," as well as leeks, are also to be avoided. How then can modern Romans expect to divine true numbers from their dreams, when beans, polypi, and garlic form so common an article of their food? Not only this, seasons and hours must be observed, which are not now considered. Plutarch insists that all dreams (insomnia) which occur in the months when the leaves fall are uncertain and mendacious, because the spirit is then disturbed and turbulent, in like manner as grapes, corn, and apples at that season are distended and effervescent ; and besides, only those dreams which occur after midnight are to be relied upon.

Post mediam noctem quum somnia vera.

This I have thought it writ down in my duty to let my

Italian friends know ; but there are many more conditions which they are bound to observe, would they hope to derive fortunes out of dreams, which it is truly shameful in the "Libro dei Sogni" not to report.

But it is not only by means of dreams and books of deams that the Italians seek the numbers which shall bring them a prize in the lottery. Sometimes, in passing through the streets, one may see a crowd collected about a man mounted upon a chair or stool. Fixed to a stand at his side, or on the back of his chair, is a glass bottle, in which are two or three hollow manikins of glass, so arranged as to rise and sink by pressure of the confined air. The neck of the bottle is cased in a tin box which surmounts it, and has a moveable cover. This personage is a charlatan, with an apparatus for divining lucky numbers for the lottery. The "soft bastard Latin" runs off his tongue in an uninterrupted stream of talk, while he offers on a tray to the bystanders a number of little folded papers containing a *pianeta*, or augury, on which are printed a fortune and a *terno*. "Who will buy a *pianeta*," he cries, "with the numbers sure to bring him a prize? He shall have his fortune told him who buys. Who does not need counsel must surely be wise. Here's Master Tommetto, who never tells lies. And here is his brother, still smaller in size. And Madama Medea Plutonia to advise. They'll write you a fortune and bring you a prize for a single *baiocco*. No creature so wise as not to need counsel. A fool I despise, who keeps his *baiocco* and loses his prize. Who knows what a fortune he'll get till he tries? Time's going, Signori,—who buys? who buys?" And so on by the yard. Meantime the crowd about him gape, stare, wonder, and finally put their hands to their pockets, out with their *baiocchi*, and buy their papers. Each then makes a mark on his paper to verify it, and returns it to the charlatan. After several are thus collected, he opens the cover of the tin box, deposits them therein with a certain

ceremony, and commences an exhortatory discourse to the manikins in the bottle,—two of whom, Maestro Tommetto and his brother, are made to resemble little black imps, while Madama Medea Plutonia is dressed *alla Francese*. “*Fa una reverenza, Maestro Tommetto!*” “Make a bow, Master Tommetto!” he now begins. The puppet bows. “*Ancora!*” “Again!” Again he bows. “*Lesto, Signore, un piccolo giretto!*” “Quick, sir, a little turn!” and round whirls the puppet. “Now, up, up, to make a registry on the ticket; and do it conscientiously, Master Tommetto!” And up the imp goes, and disappears through the neck of the bottle. Then comes a burst of admiration at his cleverness from the charlatan. Turning now to the other imp, he goes through the same *rôle* with him. “And now, Madama Medea, make a reverence, and follow your husband!”

“Ed ora, Madama Medea, Cospetto!
 Fa una reverenza col tuo bel petto!
 E via! su! un piccolo giretto!
 Lesto, presto, su, sotto il tetto
 Al caro marito, al bello Moretto—
 Al buono, amabile, tuo Tommetto,”

And up she goes. A moment after, down they all come again at his call; he lifts the cover of the box, cries, “*Oh! quanto sei caro, mio buono Tommetto!*” and triumphantly exhibits the papers, each with a little freshly-written inscription, and distributes them to the purchasers. Now and then he takes from his pocket a little bottle containing a mixture of the colour of wine, and a paper filled with some sort of powder, and, exclaiming, “*Ah! tu hai fame e sete, mi pare! Bisogna che ti dia da bere e mangiare!*” pours them into the tin cup.

It is astonishing to see how many of these little tickets a clever charlatan will sell in an hour, and principally on account of the lottery-numbers they contain. The fortunes are all the stereotype thing, and almost invariably warn you

to be careful lest you should be "*tradito*," or promise that you shall not be "*tradito*;" for the idea of betrayal is the corner-stone of every Italian's mind.

In not only permitting, but promoting the lottery, Italy is certainly far behind England, France, and America. This system no longer exists with us, except in the disguised shape of gift-enterprises, art-unions, and that unpleasant institution of mendicant robbery called the raffle, and employed specially by those "who have seen better days." But a fair parallel to this rage of the Italians for the lottery is to be found in the love of betting, which is a national characteristic of the English. I do not refer to the bets upon horseflesh at Ascot, Epsom, and Goodwood, by which fortunes change owners in an hour, and so many men are ruined, but rather to the general habit of betting upon any and every subject to settle a question, no matter how trivial, for which the Englishman is everywhere renowned on the Continent. Betting is with most other nations a form of speech, but with Englishmen it is a serious fact, and no one will be long in their company without finding an opinion backed up by a bet. It would not be very difficult to parallel those cases where the Italians disregard the solemnity of death, in their eagerness for omens of lottery numbers, with equally reprehensible and apparently heartless cases of betting in England. Let any one who doubts this examine the betting-books at White's and Brookes's. In them he will find a most startling catalogue of bets,—some so bad as to justify the good parson in Walpole's story, who declared that they were such an impious set in this respect at White's, that "if the last trump were to sound, they would bet puppet-show against judgment." Let one instance suffice. A man, happening to drop down at the door of White's, was lifted up and carried in. He was insensible, and the question was, whether he were dead or not. Bets were at once given and taken on both sides, and, it being proposed

to bleed him, those who had taken odds that he was dead protested, on the ground that the use of the lancet would affect the fairness of the bet. In the matter of play, things have now much changed since the time when Mr. Thynne left the club at White's in disgust, because he had won only twelve hundred guineas in two months. There is also a description of one of Fox's mornings, about the year 1783, which Horace Walpole has left us, and the truth of which Lord Holland admits, which it would be well for those to read who measure out hard justice to the Italians for their love of the lottery. Let us be fair. Italy is in these respects behind England by half a century; but it is as idle to argue hard-heartedness in an Italian who counts the drops of blood at a beheading, as to suppose that the English have no feeling, because in the bet we have mentioned there was a protest against the use of the lancet; or to deny kindness to a surgeon who lectures on structure and disease while he removes a cancer.

Vehement protests against the lottery and all gaming are as often uttered in Italy as elsewhere; and among them may be cited this passage from "L'Asino," by one of the most powerful of her modern writers, Guerrazzi:—

"Is not Tuscany the garden of Italy? So say the Tuscans; and the Florentines add, that Florence is the Athens of Tuscany. Truly, both seem beautiful. Let us search in Tuscany. At Barberino di Mugello, in the midst of an olive-grove is a cemetery, where the vines, which have taken root in the outer walls and climbed over their summit, fall into the inclosed space, as if they wished to garland Death with vine-leaves and make it smile; over the gate, strange guardians of the tombs, two fig-trees give their shadow and fruit to recompense the piety of the passers-by, giving a fig in exchange for a *De Profundis*; while the ivy, stretching its wanton arms over the black cross, endeavours to clothe the austere sign of the Redemption with the jocund

leaves of Bacchus, and recalls to your mind the mad Phryne who vainly tempted Xenocrates. A beautiful cemetery, by my faith! a cemetery to arouse in the body an intense desire to die, if only for the pleasure of being buried there. Now observe. Look into my magic-lantern. What figures do you see? A priest with a pick; after him a peasant with a spade; and behind them a woman with a hatchet: the priest holds a corpse by the hair; the peasant, with one blow, strikes off its head; then, all things being carefully rearranged, priest, peasant, and woman, after thrusting the head into a sack, return as they came. Attention now, for I change the picture. What figures are these that now appear? A kitchen; a fire that has not its superior, even in the Inferno; and a caldron, where the hissing and boiling water sends up its bubbles. Look about, and what do you see? Enter the priest, the peasant, and the housewife, and in a moment empty a sack into the caldron. Lo! a head rolls out, dives into the water, and floats to the surface, now showing its nape and now its face. The Lord help us! It is an abominable spectacle: this poor head, with its ashy open lips, seems to say, Give me again my Christian burial! That is enough. Only take note that in Tuscany, in the beautiful middle of the nineteenth century, a sepulchre was violated, and a sacrilege committed, to obtain from the boiled head of a corpse good numbers to play in the lottery! And by way of corollary, add this to your note, that in Rome, *Caput Mundi*, and in Tuscany, Garden of Italy, it is prohibited, under the severest penalties, to play at *Faro*, *Zecchinetto*, *Banco-Fallito*, *Rossa e Nera*, and other similar games at cards, where each party may lose the whole or half the stakes, while the government encourage the play of the Lottery, by which, out of one hundred and twenty chances of winning, eighty are reserved for the bank, and forty or so allowed to the player. Finally, take note that in Rome, *Caput Mundi*, and in Tuscany, Garden of Italy, *Faro*,

Zecchinetto, Rossa e Nera were prohibited, as acknowledged pests of social existence and open death to honest customs,—as a set-off for which deprivation the game of the Lottery is still kept on foot.”

The extraordinary story here alluded to by Guerrazzi, improbable as it seems, is founded upon fact, and was clearly proved, on judicial investigation, a few years since. It is well known in Tuscany, and forms the subject of a satirical narrative (“*Il Sortilegio*”) by Giusti, a modern Tuscan poet, of true fire and genius, who has lashed the vices of his country in verses remarkable for point, idiom, and power. According to him, the method of divination resorted to in this case was as follows:—The sorcerer who invented it ordered his dupes to procure, either at dawn or twilight, ninety dry chick-peas, called *ceci*, and upon each of these to write one of the ninety numbers drawn in the lottery, with an ink made of pitch and lard, which would not be affected by water. They were then to sharpen a knife, taking care that he who did so should touch no one during the operation; and after a day of fasting, they were to dig up at night a body recently dead, and, having cut off the head and removed the brain, they were to count the beans thrice, and to shake them thrice, and then, on their knees, to put them one by one into the skull. This was then to be placed in a caldron of water and set on the fire to boil. As soon as the water boiled violently, the head would be rolled about so that some of the beans would be ejected, and the first three which were thus thrown to the surface would be a sure *terno* for the lottery. The wretched dupes added yet another feature of superstition to insure the success of this horrible device. They selected the head of their curate, who had recently died,—on the ground that, as he had studied algebra, he was a great cabalist, and any numbers from his head would be sure to draw a prize.

Some one, I have no doubt, will here be anxious to know

the numbers that bubbled up to the surface ; but I am very sorry to say that I cannot gratify their laudable curiosity, for the interference of the police prevented the completion of the sorcery. So the curious must be content to consult some other cabalist,—

“sull’ arti segrete
Di menar la Fortuna per il naso,
Pescando il certo nel gran mar del Caso.”

Despite a wide-spread feeling among the higher classes against the lottery, it still continues to exist, for it has fastened itself into the habits and prejudices of many ; and an institution which takes such hold of the passions of the people, and has lived so long, dies hard. Nor are there ever wanting specious excuses for the continuance of this, as of other reprobated systems,—of which the strongest is, that its abolition would not only deprive of their present means of subsistence numbers of persons employed in its administration, but would cut off certain charities dependent upon it, amounting to no less than forty thousand *scudi* annually. Among these may be mentioned the dowry of forty *scudi* which is given out of the profits received by the government at the drawing of every lottery to some five or six of the poor girls of Rome. The list of those who would profit by this charity is open to all, and contains thousands of names. The first number drawn in the lottery decides the fortunate persons ; and, on the subsequent day, each receives a draft for forty *scudi* on the government, payable on the presentation of the certificate of marriage. On the accession of the present Pope, an attempt was made to abolish the lottery system ; but these considerations, among others, had weight enough to prevent any changes. So deeply is this system rooted in the habits and thoughts of the people that it would be difficult if not dangerous to decree its immediate abolition—even the Italian government has not as yet ventured to interfere with it.

Though the play is generally small, large fortunes are sometimes gained. The family of the Marchese del Cinque, for instance, derive their title and fortune from the luck of an ancestor, who played and won the highest prize, a *Cinquino*. With the money thus acquired he purchased his marquissate, and took the title *del Cinque*, "of the Five," in reference to the lucky five numbers. The Villa Quaranta Cinque in Rome derives its name from a similar circumstance. A lucky Monsignore played the single number of forty-five, *al posto*, and with his winnings built the villa, to which the Romans, always addicted to nicknames, gave the name of *Quaranta Cinque*. This love of nicknames, or *soprannomi*, as they are called, is, by-the-way, an odd peculiarity of the Italians, and it often occurs that persons are known only thereby. Examples of these, among the celebrated names of Italy, are so frequent as to form a rule in favour of the nickname rather than of the real name, and in many cases the former has utterly obliterated the latter. Thus, Squint Eye (*Guercino*), Dirty Tom (*Masaccio*), The Little Dyer (*Tintoretto*), Great George (*Giorgione*), The Garland-Maker, (*Ghirlandaio*), Luke of the Madder (*Luca della Robbia*), The Little Spaniard (*Spagnoletto*), and The Tailor's Son (*Del Sarto*), would scarcely be known under their real names of Barbieri, Guido, Robusti, Barbarelli, Corradi, Ribera, and Vannucchi. The list might be very much enlarged; but let it suffice to add the following well-known names, all of which are nicknames derived from their places of birth: Perugino, Veronese, Aretino, Pisano, Giulio Romano, Correggio, Parmegiano.

The other day a curious instance of this occurred to me in taking the testimony of a Roman coachman. On being called upon to give the names of some of his companions, with whom he had been in daily and intimate intercourse for more than two years, he could give only their nicknames; their real names he did not know, and had never heard. A

little, gay, odd genius, whom I took into my service during a *villeggiatura* at Siena, would not answer to his real name, Lorenzo, but remonstrated on being so called, and said he was only *Pipetta* (The Little Pipe), a nickname given to him when a child, from his precocity in smoking, and of which he was as tenacious as if it were a title of honour. "You prefer, then, to be called *Pipetta*?" I asked. "*Felicissimo!*" was his answer. Not a foreigner comes to Rome that his name does not "suffer a sea-change into something rich and strange." Our break-jaw Saxon names are discarded, and a new christening takes place. One friend I had who was called *Il Malinconico*,—another, *La Barbarossa*,—another, *Il bel Signore*,—another, who was near-sighted, *Quel Cieco*,—and still another, *Il lungo Secco*; but generally they are called after the number of the house or the name of the street in which they live,—*La Signorina bella bionda del Palazzo Galitzin*,—*Il Signore Quattordici Capo le Case*,—*Monsieur e Madama Quindici Terzo Piano, Corso*.

But to return from this digression.—At every country festival may be seen a peculiar form of the lottery called *Tombola*; and in the notices of these *festas*, which are always placarded over the walls of Rome for weeks before they take place, the eye will always be attracted first by the imposing word *Tombola*, printed in the largest and blackest of letters. This is, in fact, the characteristic feature of the *fiesta*, and attracts large numbers of *contadini*. As in the ordinary lottery, only ninety numbers are played. Every ticket contains blank spaces for fifteen numbers, which are inserted by the purchaser, and registered duly at the office or booth where the ticket is bought. The price of tickets in any single *Tombola* is uniform; but in different *Tombolas* it varies, of course, according to the amount of the prizes. These are generally five, namely,—the *Ambò*, *Terno*, *Quaterno*, *Cinquino*, and *Tombola*, though sometimes a second *Tombola* or *Tomboletta* is added. The drawing takes place in precisely

the same manner as in the ordinary lottery, but with more ceremony. A large staging, with a pavilion, is erected, where the officers who are to superintend the drawing stand. In the centre is a glass vase, in which the numbers are placed after having been separately verified and proclaimed, and a boy gaily dressed draws them. All the ninety numbers are drawn ; and as each issues, it is called out, and exhibited on a large card. Near by stands a large framework, elevated so as to be visible to all, with ninety divisions corresponding to the ninety numbers, and on this, also, every number is shown as soon as it is drawn. The first person who has upon his ticket two drawn numbers gains an *Ambo*, which is the smallest prize. Whoever first has three numbers drawn on a line gains a *Terno* ; and so on with the *Quaterno* and *Cinquino*. The *Tombola*, which is the great prize, is won by whoever first has his whole fifteen numbers drawn. As soon as any one finds two of the drawn numbers on one line of his ticket, he cries "*Ambo*," at the top of his lungs. A flag is then raised on the pavilion, the band plays, and the game is suspended, while the claimant at once makes his way to the judges on the platform to present his ticket for examination. No sooner does the cry of "*Ambo*," "*Terno*," "*Quaterno*," take place, than there is a great rustle all around. Everybody looks out for the fortunate person, who is immediately to be seen running through the parting crowd, which opens before him, cheering him as he goes, if his appearance be poor and needy, and greeting him with sarcasms if he be apparently well to do in the world. Sometimes there are two or three claimants for the same prize, in which case it is divided among them. The *Ambo* is soon taken, and there is little room for a mistake ; but when it comes to the *Quaterno* or *Cinquino*, mistakes are very common, and the claimant is almost always saluted with chaff and jests. After his ticket has been examined, if he have won, a placard is exhibited with *Ambo*, *Terno*, *Quaterno*

on it, as the case may be. But if he have committed an error, down goes the flag, and, amidst a burst of laughter, jeering, whistling, screaming, and catcalls, the disappointed claimant sneaks back and hides himself in the excited crowd. At a really good *Tombola*, where the prizes are high, there is no end of fun and gaiety among the people. They stand with their tickets in their hands, congratulating each other ironically, as they fail to find the numbers on them, paying all sorts of absurd compliments to each other and the drawer, offering to sell out their chances at enormous prices when they are behindhand, and letting off all sorts of squibs and jests, not so excellent in themselves as provocative of laughter. If the wit be little the fun is great,—and, in the excitement of expectation, a great deal of real Italian humour is often ventilated. Sometimes, at the country fairs, the fun is rather slow, particularly where the prizes are small; but, on exciting occasions, there is a constant small fire of jests, which is very amusing.

These *Tombole* are sometimes got up with great pomp. That, for instance, which sometimes takes place in the Villa Borghese, is one of the most striking spectacles which can be seen in Rome. At one end of the great open-air amphitheatre is erected a large pavilion, flanked on either side with covered *logge* or *palchi*, festooned with yellow and white—the Papal colours,—adorned with flags, and closed round with rich old arrasés pictured over with Scripture stories. Beneath the central pavilion is a band. Midway down the amphitheatre, on either side, are two more *logge*, similarly draped, where two more bands are stationed,—and still another at the opposite end, for the same purpose. The *logge* which flank the pavilion are sold by ticket, and filled with the richer classes. Three great stagings show the numbers as they are drawn. The pit of the amphitheatre is densely packed with a motley crowd. Under the ilexes and noble stone-pines that show their dark-green foliage

against the sky, the helmets and swords of cavalry glitter as they move to and fro. All around on the green slopes are the people,—soldiers, peasants, priests, mingled together,—and thousands of gay dresses, ribbons, and parasols enliven the mass. The four bands play successively as the multitude gathers. They have already arrived in tens of thousands, but the game has not yet begun, and thousands are still flocking to see it. All the gay equipages are on the outskirts, and through the trees and up the avenues stream the crowds on foot. As we stand in the centre of the amphitheatre and look up, we get a faint idea of the old Roman gatherings when Rome emptied itself to join in the games at the Colosseum. Row upon row they stand, a mass of gay and swarming life. The sunlight flashes over them, and blazes on the rich colours. The tall golden-trunked pines and dark ilexes overshadow them here and there; above them is the soft blue dome of the Italian sky. They are gathered round the *villetta*,—they throng the roof and balconies,—they crowd the stone steps,—they pack the green oval of the amphitheatre's pit. The ring of cymbals, the clarion of trumpets, and the clash of brazen music vibrate in the air. All the world is abroad to see, from the infant in arms to the oldest inhabitant. *Monsignori* in purple stockings and tricornered hats, peasants in gay reds and crimsons, cardinals in scarlet. Princes, shopkeepers, beggars, foreigners, all mingle together; while the screams of the vendors of cigars, pumpkin-seeds, cakes, and lemonade are everywhere heard over the suppressed sea-like roar of the crowd. As you walk along the outskirts of the mass, you may see Monte Gennaro's dark peak looking over the Campagna, and all the Sabine hills trembling in a purple haze,—or, strolling down through the green avenues, you may watch the silver columns of fountains as they crumble in foam and plash in their mossy basins,—or gather masses of the sweet Parma violet and other beautiful wild flowers.

The only other games among the modern Romans, which deserve particular notice from their peculiarity, are those of Cards. In an Italian pack there are only forty cards,—the eight, nine, and ten of the French and English cards having no existence. The suits also have different signs and names, and, instead of hearts, spades, clubs, and diamonds, they are called *coppe*, *spade*, *bastoni*, and *denari*,—all being of the same colour, and differing entirely in form from our cards. The *coppe* are cups or vases ; the *spade* are swords ; the *bastoni* are veritable clubs or bludgeons ; and the *denari* are coins. The games are still more different from ours than the cards, and they are legion in number. There are *Briscola*, *Tresette*, *Calabresella*, *Banco-Fallito*, *Rossa e Nera*, *Scaraccoccia*, *Scopa*, *Spizzica*, *Faraone*, *Zecchinetto*, *Mercante in Fiera*, *La Bazzica*, *Ruba-Monte*, *Uomo-Nero*, *La Paura*, and I know not how many others,—but they are recorded and explained in no book, and are only to be picked up orally. Wherever you go, on a *fiesta*-day, you will find persons playing cards. At the common *osterias*, before the doors or on the soiled tables within, on the ruins of the Cæsars' palaces and in the Temple of Peace, on the stone tables in the *vigna*, on the walls along the public roads, on the uncarved blocks of marble in front of the sculptors' studios, in the antechambers or gateways of palaces,—everywhere cards are played. Every *contadino* has a pack in his pocket, with the flavour of the soil upon it. The playing is ordinarily for very low sums, often for nothing at all. But there are some games which are purely games of luck, and dangerous. Some of these, as *Rossa e Nera*, *Banco-Fallito*, and *Zecchinetto*, though prohibited by the government, are none the less favourite games in Rome, particularly among those who play for money. *Zecchinetto* may be played by any number of persons, after the following manner :—The dealer, who plays against the whole table, deals to each player one card. The next card is then turned up as a trump. Each player then makes his bet on

the card dealt to him, and places his money on it. The dealer then deals to the table the other cards in order, and any of the players may bet on them as they are thrown down. If a card of the number of that bet issue before a card corresponding to the number of the trump, the dealer wins the stake on that card; but whenever a card corresponding to the trump issues, the player wins on every card on which he has bet. When the banker or dealer loses at once, the bank "*fa toppa*," and the deal passes, but not otherwise. Nothing can be more simple than this game, and it is just as dangerous as it is simple, and as exciting as it is dangerous. A late Roman *principessa* is said to have been passionately fond of it, and to have lost enormously by it. The story runs, that, while passing the evening at a friend's house, she lost ten thousand *scudi* at one sitting,—upon which she staked her horses and carriage, which were at the door waiting to take her home, and lost them also. She then wrote a note to the prince, her husband, saying that she had lost her carriage and horses at *Zecchinetto*, and wished others to be sent for her. To this he answered, that she might return on foot,—which she was obliged to do.

This will serve at least as a specimen of the games of chance played by the Romans at cards. Of the more innocent games, *Briscola*, *Tresette*, and *Scaraccoccia* are the favourites among the common people. The first of these is, perhaps, the most popular of all. It is played by either two or four persons. The *Fante* (or knave) counts as two; the *Cavallo* (equal to our queen) as three; the *Rè* (king) as four; the three-spot as ten; and the ace as eleven. Three cards are dealt to each person, and after the deal the next card is turned as trump, or *Briscola*. Each plays, and, after one card all round is played, its place is supplied by a new deal of one card to each. Every card of the trump-suit takes any card of the other suits. Each player takes as many counting-cards as he can, and, at the end of the game,

he who counts the most wins,—the account being made according to the value of the cards, as stated above.

Far better games than this are *Tresette* and *Calabresella*. These are the favourites of the Cardinals, Monsignore, and Prelates, when they play among themselves in purely Roman society; and so persuaded am I that they will also be favourites of yours, that I deem it my duty to acquaint you with the rules of these two admirable games. The more you play them, and the more you enter into their *finesse*, the more you will enjoy them; for, though apparently simple, they require much skill and calculation. At all events, one gets tired of constantly playing whist, even though “with a clean hearth and the rigour of the game,” demanded by all players of the order of Mrs. Battle; and certainly *Calabresella*, which is played by three, is better than whist with a dummy. Try these games, my good friend, and ever after you will thank me and believe in the taste of the Prelatura of Rome.

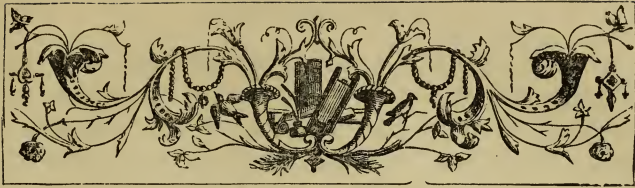
And first as to the general rules. The Italian cards, being only forty in number, you must throw out the eight, nine, and ten spots of the French pack. In playing, the highest card in value is the three-spots, then the two, then the ace, after which follow the king, queen, knave, seven, six, and so on. In making up the game the ace counts one point. The other enumerated cards, from the three to the knave inclusive, count one-third of a point, three being required to make a point. The last trick also counts one point, independent of the cards composing it. No card can take another unless it be a higher card of the same suit, there being no trumps. The first hand in every trick has the right, in playing his card, to strike it on the table, and thus to indicate to his partner that he wishes him to return the lead, or to drag it along the table to indicate the opposite.

Now as to the special rules of *Tresette*. This game is played between four persons, who select partners as in whist,

and the cards are distributed, not one by one, but first by fours and then by threes, until all are dealt. After examining his cards, each player is bound, before the game commences, to declare or claim in case he holds three cards of three spots, three of two spots, or three aces; or in case he holds what is called a "*Napolitana*," which is the three, two, and ace of one and the same suit. This he does by saying "*accuso*," I declare or claim. But he is not bound to tell *what* he claims until the first hand is played. Then he must say whether he claims three aces, three twos, three threes, or a "*Napolitana*." At any time during the game the others have a right to demand, in case he claim anything except the "*Napolitana*," what he claims; but he may refuse to answer until the last card of the trick, during which or in anticipation of which the demand is made, is played down. Whoever holds the "*Napolitana*," or three aces, three twos, or three threes, counts three points on each series. If he hold four threes, twos, or aces, he counts four points. The game now commences. Each party endeavours to take as many counting-cards as it can, and when all are played each counts according to the general rules before given—three cards for the taking of the last trick, three cards for every ace, and one for each two, three, king, queen, and knave. The number thus made up is divided by three to give the number of points (a card being, as before said, one-third of a point), and to these are added the points made by the claim. The number of the points is regulated by agreement at twenty-one, at thirty-one, or at forty-one. No card takes a trick unless it is the highest of the suit which is led.

Calabresella is played by three persons. Twelve cards are dealt to each by fours, and the four remaining cards are placed on the table with their faces down. The first player, after examining his cards, if he feels himself strong enough to play against the other two, who are thus made partners,

so declares. In such case he has the right to demand, first, any three-spot that he wishes, and the person who holds it must surrender it to him, receiving in return, before the playing commences, any card the other chooses to give. He then may turn up the four cards on the table, so as to be seen by all, and take them all into his hand, which he makes up at his pleasure, replacing any four cards on the table with their faces down. These the other players cannot examine, and they belong to the hand that takes the last trick. The party which makes the most points wins, and the counting is made according to the general rules before stated. If the three which he demands is among the four cards on the table, he cannot call for another three. But in case all the threes are dealt to him, and not otherwise, he may call for any card of two spots. In case the first person is not strong enough to play against the other two, he passes his right to the next, and if he cannot stand, he passes it on to the third. If none accept, the cards are dealt again. If the player who stands against the others forgets to put four cards on the table in place of those he takes up, he loses the game. If he wins he takes the stakes of each of the others; and if he loses he pays each the stakes. If he does not make a single point he pays double; if he takes the whole cards they pay him double.



CHAPTER VII.

MAY IN ROME.

MAY has come again,—“the delicate-footed May,” her feet hidden in flowers as she wanders over the Campagna, and the cool breeze of the Campagna blowing back her loosened hair. She calls to us from the open fields to leave the wells of damp churches and shadowy streets, and to come abroad and meet her where the mountains look down from roseate heights of vanishing snow upon plains of waving grain. The hedges have put on their best draperies of leaves and flowers, and, girdled in at their waist by double osier bands, stagger luxuriantly along the road like a drunken Bacchanal procession, crowned with festive ivy, and holding aloft their snowy clusters of elder-blossoms like *thyrsi*. Among their green robes may be seen thousands of beautiful wild flowers,—the sweet-scented laurustinas, all sorts of running vetches and wild sweet-pea, the delicate vases of dewy morning-glories, clusters of eglantine or sweet-brier roses, fragrant acacia-blossoms covered with bees and buzzing flies, the gold of glowing gorses, and scores of purple and yellow flowers of which I know not the names. On the gray walls straggle and cluster vines, grass, and the humble class of flowers which go by the ignoble name of weeds; and over them, held down by the green cord of the stalk, balance the rent balloons of hundreds of flaming scarlet poppies

that seem to have fed on fire. The undulating swell of the Campagna is here ablaze with them for acres, and there deepening with growing grain, or snowed over by myriads of daisies. Music and song, too, are not wanting; hundreds of birds are in the hedges. The lark, "from his moist cabinet rising," rains down his trills of incessant song from invisible heights of blue sky; and whenever one passes the wayside groves, a nightingale is sure to bubble into song. The oranges, too, are in blossom, perfuming the air; locust-trees are tasselled with odorous flowers; and over the walls of the Campagna villa bursts a cascade of vines covered with foamy Banksia roses.

The Carnival of the kitchen-gardens is now commencing. Peas are already an old story, strawberries are abundant, and cherries are beginning to make their appearance in these first days of May; old women sell them at every corner, tied together in tempting bunches, as in "the cherry orchard" which Miss Edgeworth has made fairyland in our childish memories. Asparagus also has long since come; and artichokes make their daily appearance on the table, sliced up and fried, or boiled whole, or coming up roasted and gleaming with butter, with more outside capes and coats than an ideal English coachman of the olden times. Here, too, is fennel, tasting like anisette, and good to mix in the salads. And great beans lie about in piles, the *contadini* twisting them out of their thick pods with their thumbs, to eat them raw. Nay, even the *signoria* of the noble families do the same as they walk through the gardens, and think them such a luxury that they eat them raw for breakfast. But over and above all other vegetables are the lettuces, which are one of the great staples of food for the Roman people, and so crisp, fresh, delicate, and high-flavoured, that he who eats them once will hold Nebuchadnezzar no longer a subject for compassion, but rather of envy. Drowned in fresh-olive oil and strong with vinegar, they are a feast for

the gods ; and even in their natural state, without condiments, they are by no means to be despised. At the corners of the streets they lie piled in green heaps, and are sold at a *baiocco* for five heads. At noontide, the *contadini* and labourers feed upon them without even the condiment of salt, crunching their white teeth through the crisp, wet leaves, and alternating a bite at a great wedge of bread ; and toward nightfall one may see carts laden high up with closely-packed masses of them coming in from the Campagna for the market. In a word, the *fiesta* of the vegetables, at which they do not eat, but are eaten, and the Carnival of the kitchen-garden have come.

But—a thousand, thousand pardons, O mighty Cavolo !—how have I dared omit thy august name ? On my knees, O potentest of vegetables, I crave forgiveness ! I will burn at thy shrine ten waxen candles, in penance, if thou wilt pardon the sin and shame of my forgetfulness ! The smoke of thy altar-fires, the steam of thy incense, and the odours of thy sanctity rise from every hypæthral shrine in Rome. Outdoors and in-doors, wherever the foot wanders, on palatial stairs or in the hut of poverty, in the convent pottage and the “*Lepre*,” soup, in the wooden platter of the beggar and the silver tureen of the prince, thou fillest our nostrils, thou satisfiest our stomach. Far away, whenever I inhale thy odour, I shall think of “*Roman Joys* ;” a whiff from thine altar in a foreign land will bear me back to the Eternal City, “*the City of the Soul*,” the City of the Cabbage, the Home of the Dioscuri, *Cavolo* and *Broccoli* ! Yes, as Paris is recalled by the odour of chocolate, and London by the damp steam of malt, so shall Rome come back when my nostrils are filled with thy penetrative fragrance !

Saunter out at any of the city-gates, or lean over the wall at San Giovanni (and where will you find a more charming spot ?), or look down from the windows of the Villa Negroni, and your eye will surely fall on one of the Roman kitchen-

gardens, patterned out in even rows and squares of green. Nothing can be prettier or more tasteful in their arrangement than these variegated carpets of vegetables. A great cistern of running water crowns the height of the ground, which is used for the purposes of irrigation; and towards nightfall the vent is opened, and you may see the gardeners unbanking the channelled rows to let the inundation flow through hundreds of little lanes of intersection and canals between the beds, and then banking them up at the entrance when a sufficient quantity of water has entered. In this way they fertilize and refresh the soil, which else would parch under the continuous sun. And this, indeed, is all the fertilization they need,—so strong is the soil all over the Campagna. The accretions and decay of thousands of years have covered it with a loam whose richness and depth are astonishing. Dig where you will, for ten feet down, and you do not pass through its wonderfully fertile loam into gravel, and the slightest labour is repaid a hundredfold.

As one looks from the Villa Negroni windows, he cannot fail to be impressed by the strange changes through which this wonderful city has passed. The very spot on which Nero, the insane emperor-artist, fiddled while Rome was burning has now become a vast kitchen-garden, belonging to Prince Massimo (himself a descendant, as he claims, of Fabius Cunctator), where men no longer, but only lettuces, asparagus, and artichokes, are ruthlessly cut down. The inundations are not for mock sea-fights among slaves, but for the peaceful purposes of irrigation. And though the fiddle of Nero is only traditional, the trumpets of the French, murdering many an unhappy strain near by, are a most melancholy fact. In the bottom of the valley, a noble old villa, covered with frescoes, has been turned into a manufactory of bricks, and the very Villa Negroni itself is now doomed to be the site of a railway station. Yet here the princely family of Negroni lived; and the very lady at whose

house Lucrezia Borgia took her famous revenge may once have sauntered under the walls, which still glow with ripening oranges, to feed the gold-fish in the fountain,—or walked with stately friends through the long alleys of clipped cypresses, and pick-nicked, *alla Giorgione*, on lawns which are now but kitchen-gardens dedicated to San Cavolo. It pleases me, also, descending in memories to a later time, to look up at the summer-house built above the gateway, and recall the days when Shelley and Keats came there to visit their friend Severn, the artist (for that was his studio), and look over the same alleys and gardens, and speak words one would have been so glad to hear,—and, coming still later down, to recall the hearty words and brave heart of one of America's best sculptors and my dear friend, Thomas Crawford.

Should the ghosts of the past waken at nightfall to wander through these gardens, they would be startled by the wild shriek and snort of the iron steed with his fiery eyes and vaporous breath, that, dragging behind him the long and clattering train from Naples, comes plunging through ancient walls, and tombs, and modern vineyards and cypress-alleys, to stable himself at last within the walls of Diocletian's ancient baths.

But to return to the kitchen-gardens. Pretty as they are to the eye, they are not considered to be wholesome ; and no Roman will live in a house near one of them, especially if it lie on the southern and western side, so that the Scirocco and the prevalent summer winds blow over it. The daily irrigation, in itself, would be sufficient to frighten all Italians away ; for they have a deadly fear of all effluvia arising from decomposing vegetable substances, and suppose, with a good deal of truth, that, wherever there is water on the earth, there is decomposition. But this is not the only reason ; for the same prejudice exists in regard to all kinds of gardens, whether irrigated or not,—and even to groves of trees and clusters of bushes, or vegetation of any kind, around a

house. This is the real reason why, even in their country villas, their trees are almost always planted at a distance from the house, so as to expose it to the sun and to give it a free ventilation. Trees they do not care for ; damp is their determined foe, and therefore they will not purchase the luxury of shade from foliage at the risk of the damp it is supposed to engender. On the north, however, gardens are not thought to be so prejudicial as on the south and west, as the cold, dry winds come from the former direction. The malaria, as we call it, though the term is unknown to Romans, is never so dangerous as after a slight rain, just sufficient to wet the surface of the earth without deeply penetrating it ; for decomposition is then stimulated, and the miasma arising from the Campagna is blown abroad. So long as the earth is dry, there is no danger of fever, except at morning and nightfall, and then simply because of the heavy dews which the porous and baked earth then inhales and expires. After the autumn has given a thorough, drenching rain, Rome is healthy and free from fever.

Rome has with strangers the reputation of being unhealthy ; but this opinion I cannot think well founded,—to the extent, at least, of the common belief. The diseases of children there are ordinarily very light, while in America and England they are terrible. Scarlet and typhus fevers, those fearful scourges in the North, are known at Rome only under most mitigated forms. Cholera has shown no virulence there ; and for diseases of the throat and lungs the air alone is almost curative. The great curse of the place is the intermittent fever, in which any other illness is apt to end. But this, except in its peculiar phase of *Perniciosa*, though a very annoying is by no means a dangerous disease, and has the additional advantage of a specific remedy. The Romans themselves of the better class seldom suffer from it, and I cannot but think that with a little prudence it may be easily avoided. Those who are most attacked by it are the

labourers and *contadini* on the Campagna ; and how can it be otherwise with them? They sleep often on the bare ground, or on a little straw under a hut just large enough to admit them on all-fours. Their labour is exhausting, and performed in the sun, and while in a violent perspiration they are often exposed to sudden draughts and checks. Their food is poor, their habits careless, and it would require an iron constitution to resist what they endure. But, despite the life they lead and their various exposures, they are for the most part a very strong and sturdy class. This intermittent fever is undoubtedly a far from pleasant thing ; but Americans who are terrified at it in Rome give it no thought in Philadelphia, where it is more prevalent,—and while they call Rome unhealthy, live with undisturbed confidence in cities where scarlet and typhus fevers annually rage.

It is a singular fact, that the French soldiers, who in 1848 made the siege of Rome, suffered no inconvenience or injury to their health from sleeping on the Campagna, and that, despite the prophecies to the contrary, very few cases of fever appeared, though the siege lasted during the summer months. The reason of this is doubtless to be found in the fact that they were better clothed, better fed, and in every way more careful of themselves than the *contadini*. Foreigners, too, who visit Rome, are very seldom attacked by intermittent fever ; and it may truly be said, that, when they are, it is, for the most part, their own fault. There is generally the grossest inconsistency between their theories and their practice. Believing as they do that the least exposure will induce fever, they expose themselves with singular recklessness to the very causes of fever. After hurrying through the streets, and getting into a violent perspiration, they plunge at once into some damp pit-like church or chill gallery, where the temperature is at least ten degrees lower than the outer air. The bald-headed, rosy John Bull, steaming with heat, doffs at once the hat which he wore in the street, and, of

course, is astounded if the result prove just what it would be anywhere else,—and if he take cold and get a fever, charges it to the climate, and not to his own stupidity and recklessness. Beside this, foreigners will always insist on carrying their home habits with them wherever they go; and it is exceedingly difficult to persuade any one that he does not understand the climate better than the Italians themselves, whom he puts down as a poor set of timid ignoramuses. However, the longer one lives in Rome, the more he learns to value the Italian rules of health. There is probably no people so careful in these matters as the Italians, and especially the Romans. They understand their own climate, and they have a decided dislike of death. In France and England suicides are very common; in Italy they are almost unknown. The American recklessness of life completely astounds the Italian. He enjoys life, studies every method to preserve it, and considers any one who risks it unnecessarily as simply a fool.

What, then, are their rules of life? In the first place, in all their habits they are very regular. They eat at stated times, and cannot be persuaded to partake of anything during the intervals. If it be not their hour for eating, they will refuse the choicest viands, and sit at your table fasting, despite every temptation you can offer. They are also very abstemious in their diet, and gluttony is the rarest of vices. I do not believe there is another nation in Europe that eats so sparingly. In the morning they take a cup of coffee, generally without milk, sopping in it some light *brioche*. Later in the day they take a slight lunch of soup and macaroni, with a glass of wine. This lasts them until dinner, which begins with a watery soup; after which the *lesso* or boiled meat comes on, and is eaten with one vegetable, which is less a dish than a garnish to the meat; then comes a dish of some vegetable eaten with bread; then, perhaps, a chop, or another dish of meat, garnished with a vegetable; some

light *dolce* or fruit, and a cup of black coffee,—the latter for digestion's sake,—finish the repast. The quantity is very small, however, compared to what is eaten in England, France, America, or, though last, not least, Germany. Late in the evening they have a supper. When dinner is taken in the middle of the day lunch is omitted. This is the rule of the better classes. The workmen and middle classes, after their cup of coffee and bit of bread or *brioche* in the morning, take nothing until night, except another cup of coffee and bread,—and their dinner finishes their meals after their work is done. From my own observation, I should say that an Italian does not certainly eat more than half as much as a German, or two-thirds as much as an American. The climate will not allow of gormandizing, and much less food is required to sustain the vital powers than in America, where the atmosphere is so stimulating to the brain and the digestion, or in England, where the depressing effects of the climate must be counteracted by stimulants. Go to any *table d'hôte* in the season, and you will at once know all the English who are new comers by their bottle of ale, or claret, or sherry, or brandy; for the Englishman assimilates with difficulty, and unwillingly puts off his home-habits. The fresh American will always be recognized by the morning dinner, which he calls a breakfast.

If you wish to keep your health in Italy, follow the example of the Italians. Eat a third less than you are accustomed to do at home. Do not drink habitually of brandy, porter, ale, or even Marsala, but confine yourselves to the lighter wines of the country or of France. Do not walk much in the sun; “only Englishmen and dogs” do that, as the proverb goes; and especially take heed not to expose yourself, when warm, to any sudden changes of temperature. If you have heated yourself with walking in the sun, be careful not to go at once, and especially towards nightfall, into the lower and shaded streets, which have begun to gather the damps, and

are kept cool by the high thick walls of the houses. Remember that the difference of temperature is very great between the narrow, shaded streets and the high, sunny Pincio. If you have the misfortune to be of the male sex, and especially if you suffer under the sorrow of the first great Cæsar, in being bald, buy yourself a little skullcap (it is as good as his laurels for the purpose), and put it on your head whenever you enter the churches and cold galleries. Almost every fever here is the result of suddenly-checked transpiration of the skin; and if you will take the precaution to cool yourself before entering churches and galleries, and not to expose yourself while warm to sudden changes of temperature, you may live twenty years in Rome without a fever. Do not stand in draughts of cold air, and shut your windows when you go to bed. There is nothing an Italian fears like a current of air, and with reason. He will never sit between two doors or two windows. If he has walked to see you and is in the least warm, pray him to keep his hat on until he is cool, if you would be courteous to him. You will find that he will always use the same *gentilezza* to you. The reason why you should shut your windows at night is very simple. The night-air is invariably damp and cold, contrasting greatly with the warmth of the day, and it is then that the miasma from the Campagna drifts into the city. And oh, my American friends! repress your national love for hot rooms and great fires, and do not make an oven of your *salon*. Bake yourselves, kiln-dry yourselves, if you choose, in your furnaced houses at home, but, if you value your health, "reform that altogether" in Italy. Increase your clothing and suppress your fires, and you will find yourselves better in head and in pocket. With your great fires you will always be cold and always have colds; for the houses are not tight, and you only create great draughts thereby. You will not persuade an Italian to sit near them;—he will, on the contrary, ask your permission to take

the farthest corner away from the fire. Seven winters in Rome have convinced me of the correctness of their rule. Of course, you do not believe me or them; but it would be better for you if you did,—and for me, too, when I come to visit you.

But I must beg pardon for all this advice; and as my business is not to write a medical thesis here, let me return to pleasanter things.

Scarcely does the sun drop behind St. Peter's on the first day of May, before bonfires begin to blaze from all the country towns on the mountain-sides, showing like great beacons. This is a custom founded in great antiquity, and common to the North and South. The first of May is the Festival of the Holy Apostles in Italy; but in Germany, and still farther north, in Sweden and Norway, it is *Walpurgisnacht*, when goblins, witches, hags, and devils hold high holiday, mounting on their brooms for the Brocken. And it was on this night that Mephistopheles carried Faust on his wondrous ride, and showed him the spectre of Margaret with the red line round her throat.

In the Neapolitan towns great fires are built on this festival, around which the people dance, jumping through the flames, and flinging themselves about in every wild and fantastic attitude. Similar bonfires may also be seen blazing everywhere over the hills and on the Campagna on the eve of the day of San Giovanni, which occurs on the 24th of June; and if you would have a medicine to cure all wounds and cuts, go out before daylight and pluck the little flower called *pilatro* (St. John's wort), and make an infusion of it before the sun is up; but at all events be sure on the eve of this day to place a plate of salt at the door, for it is the witches' festival, and no one of the tribe can pass the salt to injure you without first counting every grain, a task which will occupy the whole night, and thus save you from evil. Besides this, place a pitchfork, or any fork, by the door, as

an additional safeguard, in case she calls in allies to help her count.

These are relics of the old pagan custom alluded to by Ovid,* and particularly described by Varro, when the peasants made huge bonfires of straw, hay, and other inflammable materials, called "*Palilia*," and men, women, and children danced round them and leaped through them in order to obtain expiation and free themselves from evil influences—the mothers holding out over the flames those children who were too young to take an active part in this rite. The canonist Balsamon, in his comment on the sixty-fifth canon of the Council "in Trullo," also reports, on the authority of the Patriarch of Constantinople, among other superstitious usages, that of leaping through the fires that even then it was the custom to make on the eve of St. John. But this rite goes much farther back into antiquity, and may be referred to the most ancient oracle of Saturn, by which it was ordered that children should be passed through flames, and which was afterwards barbarously interpreted to mean that they should be burned alive, as a sacrifice to Saturn.

The month of May is the culmination of the spring and the season of seasons at Rome. No wonder that foreigners, who have come when winter sets in and take wing before April shows her sky, sometimes growl at the weather, and ask if this is the beautiful Italian clime. They have simply selected the rainy season for their visit; and one cannot expect to have sun the whole year through, without intermission. Where will they find more sun in the same season? where will they find milder and softer air? Even in the middle of winter, days, and sometimes weeks, descend as it were from heaven to fill the soul with delight; and a lovely day in Rome is lovelier than under any other sky on

* "Moxque per ardentis stipulæ crepitantis acervos,
Trajicias celeri strenua membra pede."—*Fasti*, lib. 4.

earth. But just when foreigners go away in crowds, the weather is settling into the perfection of spring, and then it is that Rome is most charming. The rains are over, the sun is a daily blessing, all nature is bursting into leaf and flower, and one may spend days on the Campagna without fear of colds and fever. Stay in Rome during May if you wish to feel its beauty.

The best rule for a traveller who desires to enjoy the charms of every clime would be to go to the North in the winter and to the South in the spring and summer. Cold is the speciality of the North, and all its sports and gaieties take thence their tone. The houses are built to shut out the demon of Frost, and to protect one from his assaults of ice and snow. Let him howl about your windows, and scrawl his wonderful landscapes on your panes, and pile his fantastic wreaths outside, while you draw round the blazing hearth and enjoy the artificial heat and warm in the social converse that he provokes. Your punch is all the better for his threats; by contrast you enjoy the more. Or brave him outside in a flying sledge, careering with jangling bells over wide wastes of snow, while the stars, as you go, fly through the naked trees that are glittering with ice-jewels, and your blood tingles with excitement, and your breath is blown like a white incense to the skies. That is the real North. How tame he will look to you when you go back in August and find a few hard apples, a few tough plums, and some sour little things which are apologies for grapes! He looks sneaky enough then, with his make-believe summer, and all his furs off.

No, then is the time for the South. All is simmering outside, and the locust saws and shrills till he seems to heat the air. You stay in the house at noon, and know what a virtue there is in thick walls which keep out the fierce heats, in gaping windows and doors that will not shut because you need the ventilation. You will not now complain of the

stone and brick floors that you cursed all winter long, and on which you now sprinkle water to keep the air cool in your rooms. The blunders and stupidities of winter are all over. The breezy *loggia* is no longer a joke. You are glad enough to sit there and drink your wine, and look over the landscape. Mariuccia brings in a great basket of purple and white grapes, which the wasp envies you as you eat, and comes to share. And here are luscious figs bursting their sugary skins, and apricots rusted in the sun, and velvety peaches that break into juice in your mouth, and great black-seeded water-melons. Nature empties her cornucopia of fruits, flowers, and vegetables over your table. Luxuriously you enjoy them, and fan yourself and take your *siesta*, with full appreciation of your *dolce far niente*. When the sun begins to slope westward, if you are in the country, you wander through the green lanes festooned with vines and pluck grapes as you go; or, if you are in the city, you saunter the evening long through the streets, where all the world are strolling, and take your *granita* of ice or sherbet, and talk over the things of the day and the time, and pass as you go home groups of singers and serenaders with guitars, flutes, and violins,—serenade, perhaps, sometimes, yourself; and all the time the great planets and stars throb in the near heavens, and the soft air full of the fragrance of orange-blossoms blows against your cheek. And you can really say, This is Italy! For it is not what you do, so much as what you feel, that makes Italy.

But pray remember that in the South every arrangement is made for the nine hot months, and not for the three cold and rainy ones you choose to spend there, and perhaps your views may be somewhat modified in respect of this “miserable people,” who, you say, “have no idea of comfort,”—meaning, of course, English comfort. Perhaps, I say; for it is in the nature of travellers to come to sudden conclusions upon slight premises, to maintain with obstinacy precon-

ceived notions, and to quarrel with all national traits except their own. And being English, unless you have a friend in India who has made you aware that cane-bottom chairs are India-English, you will be pretty sure to believe that there is no comfort without carpets and coal; or being an American, you will be apt to undervalue a gallery of pictures with only a three-ply carpet on the floor, and to “calculate” that if they could see your house in Washington Square they would feel rather ashamed. However, there is a great deal of human nature in mankind, wherever you go,—except in Paris, perhaps, where Nature is rather inhuman and artificial. And when I instance the Englishman and American as making false judgments, let me not be misunderstood as supposing them the only nations in that category. No, no! did not my Parisian acquaintance the other day assure me very gravely, after lamenting the absurdity of the Italians not speaking French instead of their own language,—“*Mais enfin, Monsieur, qu'est ce que c'est que cet Italien? ce n'est que de mauvais Francais.*” Nor is it only once that I have had the fortune to hear these peculiar philological views put forward gravely by one of the “*grande nation.*” On arriving at the railway station at Civita Vecchia the other day, I heard a little strutting French abbé make nearly the same proposition,—adding in a contemptuous tone of voice, as an illustration of the truth of his remarks—“*Regardez, par exemple, on ne sait pas même écrire le mot bagages. Dans leur patois il est ‘bagaglie.’ Quels ignorants!*”

But we are now in May, and life is altogether changed from what it was in the winter. All the windows are wide open, and there is at least one head and shoulders leaning out at every house. The poorer families are all out on their door-steps, working and chatting together, while their children run about them in the streets, sprawling, playing, and fighting. Many a beautiful theme for the artist is now

to be found in these careless and characteristic groups ; and curly-headed St. Johns may be seen in every street, half-naked, with great black eyes and rounded arms and legs. It is this which makes Rome so admirable a residence for an artist. All things are easy and careless in the out-of-doors life of the common people,—all poses unsought, all groupings accidental, all action unaffected and unconscious. One meets Nature at every turn,—not braced up in prim forms, not conscious in manners, not made up into the fashionable or the proper, but impulsive, free, and simple. With the whole street looking on, they are as unconscious and natural as if they were where no eye could see them,—ay, and more natural, too, than it is possible for some people to be, even in the privacy of their solitary rooms. They sing at the top of their lungs as they sit on their door-steps at their work, and often shout from house to house across the street a long conversation, and sometimes even read letters from upper windows to their friends below in the street. The men and women who cry their fruits, vegetables, and wares up and down the city, laden with baskets or panniers, and often accompanied by a donkey, stop to chat with group after group, or get into animated debates about prices, or exercise their wits and lungs at once in repartee in a very amusing way. Everybody is in *deshabille* in the morning, but towards twilight the girls put on their better dresses, and comb their glossy raven hair, heaping it up in great solid braids, and, hanging two long golden ear-rings in their ears and necklaces round their full necks, come forth conquering and to conquer, and saunter bare-headed up and down the streets, or lounge about the doorways or piazzas in groups, ready to give back to any jeerer as good as he sends. You see them marching along sometimes in a broad platoon of five or six, all their brows as straight as if they had been ruled, and their great dark eyes flashing out under them, ready in a moment for a

laugh or a frown. What stalwart creatures they are! What shoulders, bosoms, and backs they have! What a chance for the lungs under those stout bodices! and what finished and elegant heads! They are certainly cast in a large mould, with nothing mean or meagre about them, either in feature or figure.

Early in the morning you will see streaming through the streets, or gathered together in picturesque groups, some standing, some couching on the pavement, herds of long-haired goats, brown, white, and black, which have been driven, or rather which have followed their shepherd, into the city to be milked. The majestic, long-bearded, patriarchal he-goats shake their bells and parade solemnly round, while the silken females clatter their little hoofs as they run from the hand of the milker when he has filled his can. The goat-herd is kept pretty busy, too, milking at everybody's door; and before the fashionable world is up at nine, the milk is drained and the goats are off again to the Campagna.

You may know that it is May by the orange and lemon stands, which are erected in almost every piazza. These are little booths covered with canvas, and fantastically adorned with lemons and oranges intermixed, which, piled into pyramids, and disposed about everywhere, have a very gay effect. They are generally placed near a fountain, the water of which is conducted through a *canna* into the centre of the booth, and there, finding its own level again, makes a little spilling fountain, from which the *bibite* are diluted. Here for a *baiocco* one buys lemonade or orangeade, and all sorts of curious little drinks or *bibite*, with a feeble taste of anisette or some other herb to take off the mawkishness of the water,—or for a half-*baiocco* one may have the lemonade without sugar, and in this way it is usually drunk. On all *fiesta*-days little portable tables are carried round the streets hung to the neck of the *limonaro*, and set down at conve-

nient spots, or whenever a customer presents himself, and the cries of “*Acqua fresca,—limonaro, limonaro,—chi vuol bere?*” are heard on all sides; and I can assure you, that, after standing on tip-toe for an hour in the heat, and straining your neck and head to get sight of some church procession, you are glad enough to go to the extravagance of even a lemonade *with* sugar; and smacking your lips, you bless the mission of the *limonaro*, which must have been early founded by the Good Samaritan. Listen to his own description of himself in one of the popular *canzonetti* sung about the streets by wandering musicians to the accompaniment of a violin and guitar:—

- “Ma per altro son uomo ingegnoso,
 Non possiedo, ma sono padrone;
 Vendo l' acqua con spirito e limone
 Finche dura d' estate il calor.
- “Ho un capello di paglia,—ma bello!
 Un zinale di sopra fino;
 Chi mi osserva nel mio tavolino,
 Gli vien sete, se sete non ha.
- “Spaccio spirti, sciroppi, acquavite,
 Fo 'ranciate di nuova invenzione;
 Voi vedete quante persone
 Chiedono acqua,—e rispondo,—Son quà!”*

-
- * Yet for all that I'm a man of resources,
 Master, at least, if no wealth I inherit;
 Water I sell, mixed with lemon and spirit,
 Long as the heat of the summer endures.
- I've a straw hat, too, that's not to be sneered at!
 Find me an apron as fine, if you're able?
 Just let a man look at me and my table,
 Thirsty he'll be, if he was not before.
- Here I sell spirits, and syrups, and brandy,
 Make orangeades of a novel invention;
 You will see crowds, if you'll just pay attention,
 Asking for water,—and I cry,—I'm here.

May is the month sacred to the Madonna, as it was to the Bona Dea among the ancient Romans—and the Madonna in Rome is supreme. She rules the hearts of all Catholics, and draws them to the bosom of the Church, as the consoler and intercessor of all. To her the fisherman prays as he loosens his boat from shore, for she is "*Stella Maris*," the star of the sea; and in the storm he calls upon her to save him:—

"In mare irato, in subita procella,
Invoco te! oh benigna stella!"

She stands first in all the thoughts of love and home. Her image is the household Penates; and when the day is done and night comes on, the toll of the Ave Maria recalls the mother at whose breast we were nursed, and on whose bosoms we have slept. Nor only during the duties and occupations of life is this reverence paid to the Madonna. She stands by the bedside of the dying man, and to her he recommends his soul with the last whisper that hovers over his pallid lips.

Nothing can be more impressive than the bell of the Ave Maria as you hear it in the country around Rome. The brilliant splendours of sunset have passed away—the sky is soft and pale with delicate dovelike tints, and stars are faintly peering out of its still deeps. Solemn shadows are gathered in the brown valley, where slow gray mists are rising; the mountains are cut sharply and darkly against the clear sky, and houses and belfries are printed on it in black silhouettes. Far away, the voices of peasants may be heard, returning to their homes, and wandering lights show here and there in distant meadows. As you walk musingly along, breathing the earthy smell that rises from the Campagna, and touched by the serious and pensive calm that then gathers over all Nature, your ear is struck by the

musical clang of bells ringing for Ave Maria—each of which amid the silence—

“Paia il giorno pianger che si muore,”

and every one pauses and crosses himself, and says a little prayer to the Madonna.

During this month of May special honours are paid to the Virgin. The monasteries of nuns are busy with processions and celebrations in honour of “the Mother of God,” which are pleasantly carried on within their precincts, and seen only by female friends. Sometimes you will meet a procession of ladies outside the gates, following a cross, on foot, while their carriages come after in a long file. These are societies which are making the pilgrimage of the seven basilicas outside the walls. They set out early in the morning, stopping in each basilica for a half-hour to say their prayers, and return to Rome at Ave Maria.

On every *festa*-day during this month you will see at the corners of the streets a little improvised shrine of the rudest kind, or it may be only a little festooned print of the Madonna hung against the walls of some house, or against the back of a chair, and tended by two or three little girls, who hold out a plate to you as you pass, and beg for charity, sometimes in the most pertinacious way. These are the children of poor persons, who thus levy on the public a little sum to be expended in oil for the lamps before the Madonna shrines in the street or in the house. No street—and almost no house or shop—is without a shrine erected to her, where a little light is kept constantly burning, and over each is an inscription, generally in dog Latin, setting forth some of her titles, and commanding reverence or adoration from the passer. Here are placed fresh flowers; and here may be seen at all hours of the day some poor person kneeling and saying her rosary. If an

accident happens in the street, it is to her that safety is owed, and straightway thanks must be returned to her. Very commonly the person whose life has been in danger hangs an offering on her shrine in memory of the event. It is sometimes a rude picture representing the event itself, and sometimes it is a silver hand, leg, arm, or heart, to indicate that she has enabled a broken limb to mend, or as a sign of gratitude. If one is stricken by disease it is her aid that is invoked, and her favour is bought by promises of candles to be burned at her shrine, and if the person be rich, by costly offerings of diamond necklaces, crowns, and brooches, which, in the event of recovery, are hung about her images and pictures. Nor is this done only by the ignorant and uneducated. On the road to Beilo Sguardo may be seen a shrine erected to the Madonna by the late Grand Duke of Tuscany, in grateful recognition of her divine aid in saving on this spot the life of himself and two of his children, who were nearly killed here by a carriage. Even during health a continuance of her favour and protection is invoked by the same means—just as the ancient Romans implored the assistance of their gods, or commemorated their gratitude for past favours by votive offerings hung up in the temples. Some of the oldest effigies of the Virgin are rich in these presents; and gems which are a fortune in themselves (unless the originals have been changed for paste imitations) may be seen glittering on their dark necks and bosoms. Indeed, a malicious story runs, that a magnificent necklace of diamonds worn by one of the Roman princesses once adorned the neck of a Madonna, and was sold by the Church to its present owner. However this may be, the universal reverence paid by persons of all ranks to the Madonna is a striking feature of every Roman Catholic country, and in Rome, the head of Catholicism, it attains its height.

The Madonna is the special patron of the *filatrici* (the

spinners); and it is a pretty superstition among the peasantry in Italy that the dewy gossamers found on the grass in the morning are threads and fragments blown from her distaff. The swallows, too, are under her special favour, and to kill them brings ill-luck. In nearly all the cities of Tuscany, owing to this belief, swarms of swifts may be seen hurtling to and fro with a constant sharp whistle, and haunting with perfect impunity the tall *campanili*. In the great piazza, at Siena, and round the Campo tower, they are so thick sometimes that it seems as if it was snowing swallows; and in the eaves and under the grotesque spouts of the Duomo they make their nests and whirl through the arches with a pleasant familiarity. The doves of San Marco at Venice are also saved by a similar superstition. They haunt that superb piazza and the glittering pinnacles of the cathedral, floating to and fro in the soft blue air, and alighting upon the manes of the bronze horses, with entire fearlessness; and thus are not only safe from the destructive hand of man, but are fed at the public expense. All this is the more remarkable in Italy, where the people kill and eat every little bird that they can lay their hands upon.

It is also a legend that the Madonna said to the serpent, "Will you be good to man?" and the serpent answered, "I will not." "Then crawl and trail on the ground for ever, and be accursed," said she. And so it is. Then turning to the lizard she said, "Will you be good to man?" and the lizard answered, "I will." "Then shall you have legs to run, and shall be loved and cherished." And so it is.

The great procession of the year takes place this month on Corpus Domini, and is well worth seeing, as being the finest and most characteristic of all the Church festivals. It was instituted in honour of the famous miracle at Bolsena, when the wafer dripped blood, and is, therefore, in commemoration of one of the cardinal doctrines of the Roman Church, transubstantiation, and one of its most

dogmatical miracles. The Papal procession takes place in the morning, in the piazza of Saint Peter's; and if you would be sure of it, you must be on the spot as soon as eight o'clock at the latest. The whole circle of the piazza itself is covered with an awning, festooned gaily with garlands of box, under which the procession passes; and the ground is covered with yellow sand, over which box and bay are strewn. The celebration commences with morning mass in the basilica, and that over, the procession issues from one door, and, making the whole circuit of the piazza, returns into the church. First come the *Seminaristi*, or scholars and attendants of the various hospitals and charity-schools, such as San Michele and Santo Spirito,—all in white. Then follow the brown-cowled, long-bearded Franciscans, the white Carmelites, and the black Benedictines, bearing lighted candles and chanting hoarsely as they go. You may see pass before you now all the members of these different conventual orders that there are in Rome, and have an admirable opportunity to study their physiognomies in mass. If you are a convert to Romanism, you will perhaps find in their bald heads, shaven crowns, and bearded faces a noble expression of reverence and humility; but, suffering as I do under the misfortune of being a heretic, I could but remark on their heads an enormous development of the two organs of reverence and firmness, and a singular deficiency in the upper forehead, while there was an almost universal enlargement of the lower jaw and of the base of the brain. Being, unfortunately, a friend of Phrenology, as well as a heretic, I drew no very auspicious augury from these developments; and looking into their faces, the physiognomical traits were narrow-mindedness, bigotry, or cunning. The Benedictine heads showed more intellect and will; the Franciscans more dulness and good-nature.

But while I am criticizing them they are passing by, and

a picturesque set of fellows they are. Much as I dislike the conventual creed, I should be sorry to see the costume disappear. Directly on the heels of their poverty come the three splendid triple crowns of the Pope, glittering with gorgeous jewels, borne in triumph on silken embroidered cushions, and preceded by the court jeweller. After them follow the chapters, canons, and choirs of the seven basilicas, chanting in lofty altos, solid basses, and clear ringing tenors from their old Church books, each basilica bearing a typical tent of coloured stripes and a wooden campanile with a bell which is constantly rung. Next come the canons of the churches and the *monsignori*, in splendid dresses and rich capes of beautiful lace falling below their waists; the bishops clad in cloth of silver with mitres on their heads; the cardinals brilliant in gold embroidery and gleaming in the sun; and at last the Pope himself, borne on a platform splendid with silver and gold, with a rich canopy over his head. Beneath this he kneels, or rather, seems to kneel; for, though his costly draperies and train are skillfully arranged so as to present this semblance, being drawn behind him over two blocks which are so placed as to represent his heels, yet in fact he is seated on a sunken bench or chair, as any careful eye can plainly see. However, kneeling or sitting, just as you will, there he is, before an altar, holding up the *ostia*, which is the *corpus Domini*, "the body of God," and surrounded by officers of the Swiss guards in glittering armour, chamberlains in their beautiful black and Spanish dresses with ruffs and swords, attendants in scarlet and purple costumes, and the *guardie nobili* in their red dress uniforms. Nothing could be more striking than this group. It is the very type of the Church,—pompous, rich, splendid, imposing. After them follow the dragoons mounted,—first a company on black horses, then another on bays, and then a third on grays; foot-soldiers with flashing bayonets bring up the rear, and close the proces-

sion. As the last soldiers enter the church, there is a stir among the gilt equipages of the cardinals, which line one side of the piazza,—the horses toss their scarlet plumes, the liveried servants sway as the carriages lumber on, and you may spend a half-hour in hunting out your own humble vehicle, if you have one, or throng homeward on foot with the crowd through the Borgo and over the bridge of Sant' Angelo.

This grand procession strikes the key-note of all the others ; and in the afternoon each parish brings out its banners, arrays itself in its choicest dresses, and with pomp and music bears the *ostia* through the streets, the crowd kneeling before it, and the priests chanting. During the next *ottava*, or eight days, all the processions take place in honour of this festival, and the week having passed, everything ends with the Papal procession in St. Peter's piazza, when, without music, and with uncovered heads, the Pope, cardinals, *monsignori*, canons, and the rest of the priests and officials, make the round of the piazza, bearing great Church banners.

One of the most striking of their celebrations took place this year at the church of San Rocco in the Ripetta, when the church was made splendid with lighted candles and gold bands, and a preacher held forth to a crowded audience in the afternoon. At Ave Maria there was a great procession, with banners, music, and torches, and all the evening the people sauntered to and fro in crowds before the church, where a platform was erected and draped with old tapestries, from which a band played constantly. Do not believe, my dear Presbyterian friend, that these spectacles fail deeply to affect the common mind. So long as human nature remains the same, this splendour and pomp of processions, these lighted torches and ornamented churches, this triumphant music and glad holiday of religion, will attract more than your plain conventicles, your ugly meeting-

houses, and your compromise with the bass-viol. For my own part, I do not believe that music and painting and all the other arts really belong to the Devil, or that God gave him joy and beauty to deceive with, and kept only the ugly, sour, and sad for Himself. We are always better when we are happy; and we are about as sure of being good when we are happy, as of being happy when we are good. Cheerfulness and happiness are, in my humble opinion, duties and habits to be cultivated; but, if you don't think so, I certainly would not deny you the privilege of being wretched; don't let us quarrel about it.

Rather let us turn to the Artists' Festival, which takes place in this month, and is one of the great attractions of the season. Formerly, this festival took place at Cerbara, an ancient Etruscan town on the Campagna, of which only certain subterranean caves remain. But during the revolutionary days which followed the disasters of 1848, it was suspended for two or three years by the interdict of the Papal government, and when it was again instituted, the place of meeting was changed to Fidenæ, the site of another Etruscan town, with similar subterranean excavations, which were made the head-quarters of the festival. But the new railway to Bologna having been laid out directly over this ground, the artists have been again driven away, and this year the *festa* was held, for the first time, in the grove of Egeria, one of the most beautiful spots on the whole Campagna,—and here it is to be hoped it will have an abiding rest.

This festival was instituted by the German artists, and, though the artists of all nations now join in it, the Germans still remain its special patrons and directors. Early in the morning the artists rendezvous at an appointed *osteria* outside the walls, dressed in every sort of grotesque and ludicrous costume which can be imagined. All the old dresses which can be rummaged out of the studios or

theatres, or pieced together from masking wardrobes, are now in requisition. Indians and Chinese, ancient warriors and mediæval heroes, militia-men and Punches, generals in top-boots and pig-tails, doctors in gigantic wigs and small-clothes, Falstaffs and justices "with fair round belly with good capon lined," magnificent foolscaps, wooden swords with terrible inscriptions, gigantic chapeaus with plumes made of vegetables—in a word, every imaginable absurdity is to be seen. Arrived at the place of rendezvous, they all breakfast, and then the line of march is arranged. A great wooden cart, adorned with quaint devices, and garlanded with laurel and bay, bears the president and committee. This is drawn by great white oxen, who are decorated with wreaths and flowers and gay trappings, and from it floats the noble banner of Cerbara or Fidenæ. After this follows a strange and motley train,—some mounted on donkeys, some on horses, and some afoot,—and the line of march is taken up for the grove of Egeria. What mad jests and wild fun now take place it is impossible to describe; suffice it to say that all are right glad of a little rest when they reach their destination.

Now begin to stream out from the city hundreds of carriages,—for all the world will be abroad to-day to see,—and soon the green slopes are swarming with gay crowds. Some bring with them a hamper of provisions and wine, and, spreading them on the grass, lunch and dine when and where they will; but those who would dine with the artists must have the order of the *mezzo baiocco* hanging to their buttonhole, which is distributed previously in Rome to all the artists who purchase tickets. Some few there are who also bear upon their breasts the nobler medal of *tropo merito*, gained on previous days, and these are looked upon with due reverence.

But before dinner or lunch there is a high ceremony to take place,—the great feature of the day. It is the mock-

heroic play. This year (1858) it was the meeting of Numa with the nymph Egeria at the grotto ; and thither went the festive procession ; and the priest, befilleted and draped in white, burned upon the altar as a sacrifice a great toy-sheep, whose wool "smelt to heaven;" and then from the niches suddenly appeared Numa, a gallant German in spectacles, with Egeria, a Spanish artist with white dress and fillet, who made vows over the smoking sheep, and were escorted back to the sacred grove with festal music by a joyous, turbulent crowd.

Last year, however, at Fidenæ, it was better. We had a travesty of the taking of Troy, which was eminently ludicrous, and which deserves a better description than I can give. Troy was a space inclosed within paper barriers, about breast-high, painted "to present a wall," and within these were the Trojans, clad in red, and all wearing gigantic paper helmets. There was old Priam, in spectacles, with his crown and robes,—Laocoon, in white, with a white wool beard and wig,—Ulysses, in a long yellow beard and mantle,—and Æneas, with a bald head, in a blue long-tailed coat and tall dickey, looking like the traditional Englishman in the circus, who comes to hire the horse. The Grecians were encamped at a short distance. All had round basket-work shields,—some with their names painted on them in great letters, and some with an odd device, such as a cat or pig. There were Ulysses, Agamemnon, Ajax, Nestor, Patroclus, Diomedes, Achilles, "all honourable men." The drama commenced with the issuing of Paris and Helen from the walls of Troy,—he in a tall, black French hat, girdled with a gilt crown, and she in a white dress, with a great wig dropping round her face a profusion of carrotty curls. Queer figures enough they were, as they stepped along together, caricaturing love in a pantomime, he making terrible demonstrations of his ardent passion, and she finally falling on his neck in rapture. This over, they

seated themselves near by two large pasteboard rocks, he sitting on his shield and taking out his flute to play to her, while she brought forth her knitting and ogled him as he played. While they were thus engaged, came creeping up with the stage stride of a double step, and dragging one foot behind him, Menelaus, whom Thersites had, meantime, been taunting, by pointing at him two great ox-horns. He walked all round the lovers, pantomiming rage and jealousy in the accredited ballet style, and suddenly approaching, crushed poor Paris's great black hat down over his eyes. Both, very much frightened, then took to their heels and rushed into the city, while Menelaus, after shaking Paris's shield, in defiance, at the walls, retired to the Grecian camp. Then came the preparations for battle. The Trojans leaned over their paper battlements, with their fingers to their noses, twiddling them in scorn, while the Greeks shook their fists back at them. The battle now commenced on the "ringing plains of Troy," and was eminently absurd. Paris, in hat and pantaloons (*à la mode de Paris*), soon showed the white feather, and incontinently fled. Everybody hit nowhere, fiercely striking the ground or the shields, and always carefully avoiding, as on the stage, to hit in the right place. At last, however, Patroclus was killed, whereupon the battle was suspended, and a grand *tableau* of surprise and horror took place, from which at last they recovered, and the Greeks prepared to carry him off on their shoulders. Terrible to behold was the grief of Achilles. Homer himself would have wept to see him. He flung himself on the body, and shrieked, and tore his hair, and violently shook the corpse, which, under such demonstrations, now and then kicked up. Finally, he rises, and challenges Hector to single combat, and out comes the valiant Trojan, and a duel ensues with wooden axes. Such blows and counter blows were never seen, only they never hit, but often whirled the warrior who dealt them completely

round ; they tumbled over their own blows, panted with feigned rage, lost their robes and great pasteboard helmets, and were even more absurd than any Richmond and Richard on the country boards at a fifth-rate theatre. But Hector is at last slain and borne away, and a ludicrous lay figure is laid out to represent him, with bunged-up eyes and a general flabbiness of body and want of features charming to behold. On their necks the Trojans bear him to their walls, and with a sudden jerk pitch him over them head first, and he tumbles, in a heap, into the city.

Ulysses then harangues the Greeks. He has brought out a *quarteruola* cask of wine, which, with most expressive pantomime, he shows to be the wooden horse that must be carried into Troy. His proposition is joyfully accepted, and accompanied by all, he rolls the cask up to the walls, and, flourishing a tin cup in one hand, invites the Trojans to partake. At first there is confusion in the city, and fingers are twiddled over the walls, but after a time all go out and drink, and become ludicrously drunk, and stagger about, embracing each other in the most maudlin style. Even Helen herself comes out, gets tipsy with the rest, and dances about like the most disreputable of Mænades. A great scena, however, takes place as they are about to drink. Laocoon, got up in white wool, appears, and violently endeavours to dissuade them, but in vain. In the midst of his harangue, long strings of blown-up sausage skins are dragged in for the serpents, and suddenly cast about his neck. His sons and he then form a group, the sausage-snakes are twined about them,—only the old story is reversed, and he bites the serpents, instead of the serpents biting him,—and all die in agony, travestying the ancient group.

All, being now drunk, go in, and Ulysses with them. A quantity of straw is kindled, the smoke rises, the Greeks approach and dash in the paper walls with clubs, and all is

confusion. Then Æneas, in his blue, long-tailed circus-coat, broad white hat, and tall shirt-collar, carries off old Anchises on his shoulders, with a cigar in his mouth, and bears him to a pointed section of a vessel, which is rocked to and fro by hand, as if violently agitated by the waves. Æneas and Anchises enter the boat, or rather stand behind it so as to conceal their legs, and off it sets, rocked to and fro constantly,—Æolus and Tramontana following behind, with bellows to blow up a wind, and Fair Weather, with his name written on his back, accompanying them. The violent motion, however, soon makes Æneas sick, and as he leans over the side in a helpless and melancholy manner, and almost gives up the ghost, as well as more material things, the crowd bursts into laughter. However, at last they reach two painted rocks, and found Latium, and a general rejoicing takes place. The donkey who was to have ended all by dragging the body of Hector round the walls came too late, and this part of the programme did not take place.

So much of the entertainment over, preparations are made for dinner. In the grove of Egeria the plates are spread in circles, while all the company sing part-songs and dance. At last, all is ready, the signal is given, and the feast takes place after the most rustic manner. Great barrels of wine covered with green branches stand at one side, from which flagons are filled and passed round, and the good appetites soon make direful gaps in the beef and mighty plates of lettuce. After this, and a little sauntering about for digestion's sake, come the afternoon sports. And there are donkey-races, and tilting at a ring, and foot-races, and running in sacks. Nothing can be more picturesque than the scene, with its motley masqueraders, its crowds of spectators seated along the slopes, its little tents here and there, its races in the valley, and, above all, the glorious mountains looking down from the distance. Not till the golden

light slopes over the Campagna, gilding the skeletons of aqueducts, and drawing a delicate veil of beauty over the mountains, can we tear ourselves away, and rattle back in our carriage to Rome.

The wealthy Roman families, who have villas in the immediate vicinity of Rome, now leave the city to spend a month in them and breathe the fresh air of spring. Many and many a tradesman who is well to do in the world has a little vineyard outside the gates, where he raises vegetables, grapes, and other fruits; and every *fiesta*-day you will be sure to find him and his family out in his little *villetta*, wandering about the grounds or sitting beneath his arbours, smoking and chatting with his children around him. His friends who have no villas of their own here visit him, and often there is a considerable company thus collected, who, if one may judge from their cheerful countenances and much laughter, enjoy themselves mightily. Knock at any of these villa-gates, and, if you happen to have the acquaintance of the owner, or are evidently a stranger of respectability, you will be received with much hospitality, invited to partake of the fruit and wine, and overwhelmed with thanks for your *gentilezza* when you take your leave; for the Italians are a most good-natured and social people, and nothing pleases them better than a stranger who breaks the common round of topics by accounts of his own land. Everything new is to them wonderful, just as it is to a child. They are credulous of everything you tell them about America, which is to them in some measure what it was to the English in the days of Raleigh, Drake, and Hawkins, and say "*Per Bacco!*" to every new statement. And they are so magnificently ignorant that you have *carte blanche* for your stories. Never did I know any one staggered by anything I chose to say, but once, and then I stated a simple fact. I was walking with my respectable old *padrone* Nisi about his little

garden one day, when an ambition to know something about America inflamed his breast.

“Are there any mountains?” he asked.

I told him “Yes,” and, with a chuckle of delight, he cried,—

“*Per Bacco!* And have you any cities?”

“Yes, a few little ones.” He was evidently pleased that they were small, and, swelling with natural pride, said,—

“Large as Rome, of course, they could not be.” Then, after a moment, he added, interrogatively, “And rivers too,—have you any rivers?”

“A few,” I answered.

“But not as large as our Tiber,” he replied,—feeling assured that, if the cities were smaller than Rome, as a necessary consequence, the rivers that flowed by them must be in the same category.

The bait now offered was too tempting, and I was foolish enough to say,—

“We have some rivers three thousand miles long.”

I had scarcely said these words when I regretted them. He stood and stared at me, as if petrified, for a moment. Then the blood rushed into his face, and, turning on his heel, he took off his hat, said suddenly, “*Buona sera,*” and carried my fact and his opinions together up into his private room. I am afraid that Ser Pietro decided, on consideration, that I had been taking unwarrantable liberties with him, and exceeding all proper bounds, in my attempt to impose on his good-nature. From that time forward he asked me no more questions about America.

And here, by the way, I am reminded of an incident which, though not exactly pertinent, may find here a parenthetical place, merely as illustrating some points of Italian character. One fact and two names relating to America they know universally,—Columbus and his discovery of America, and Washington.

“*Sì Signore,*” said a respectable person some time since, as he was driving me to see a carriage which he wished to sell me, and therefore desired to be particularly polite to me and my nation,—“a great man your Vashintoni! but I was sorry to hear, the other day, that his father had died in London.”

“His father dead, and in London?” I stammered, completely confounded at this extraordinary news, and fearing lest I had been too stupid in misunderstanding him.

“Yes,” he said, “it is too true that his father Vellintoni is dead. I read it in the *Diario di Roma.*”

The Italians have also a sort of personal pride in America, on the ground that it was discovered by an Italian, without whom, *chi sa* if we should ever have been discovered, and also, if they happen to know the fact, because Botta wrote a history of it. In going from Leghorn to Genoa, I once met a good-humoured *Frate*, who, having discovered that I was an American, fraternised with me, kindly offered me snuff, and at once began, as usual, a discourse on Columbus. So he informed me that Columbus was an Italian, and that he had discovered America, and was a remarkable man; to all of which I readily assented, as being true, if not new. But now a severe abstract question began to tax my friend’s powers. He said, “But how could he ever have imagined that the continent of America was there? That’s the question. It is extraordinary indeed!” And so he sat cogitating, and saying at intervals, “*Curioso! Straordinario!*” At last “a light broke in upon his brain.” His face lightened, and, looking at me, he said, “Oh! he must have read that it was there in some old book, and so went to see if it were true or not.” Vainly I endeavoured to show him that this view would deprive Columbus of his greatest distinction. He answered invariably, “*Sì! Sì! ma, via.* But without having read it, how could he ever have known it?”—thus putting the earth upon the tortoise, and leaving the tortoise to account for his own support.

Imagine that I have told you these stories sitting under the vine and fig-tree of some little villa, while Angiolina has gone to call the *padrone*, who will only be too glad to see you. But, *ecco!* at last our *padrone* comes. No, it is not the *padrone*, it is the *vignaruolo*, who takes care of his grapes and garden, and who recognises us as friends of the *padrone*, and tells us that we are ourselves *padroni* of the whole place, and offers us all sorts of fruits.

One old custom, which existed in Rome some fifteen years ago, has now passed away with other good old things. It was the celebration of the *Fravolata* or Strawberry-Feast, when men in gala-dress at the height of the strawberry-season went in procession through the streets, carrying on their heads enormous wooden platters heaped with this delicious fruit, accompanied by girls in costume, who, beating their *tamburelli*, danced along at their sides and sang the praises of the strawberry. After threading the streets of the city, they passed singing out of the gates, and at different places on the Campagna spent the day in festive sports, and had an out-door dinner and dance.*

Through time out of mind May is not the month to marry in, yet it is undoubtedly the approved month to make love in. Marry in June was the ancient rule, for June was consecrated to Juno, who presided over marriages; but love in May, when the earth is breaking forth into blossom, leaf, and flower, and honours are paid to the Bona Dea. This beautiful month was formerly celebrated by many festivals and games, not all of them of a very decorous character; when *Fescennine* verses were recited or sung in alternation by the peasants, and reminiscences of some of them may still be recognised in various parts of Italy; one of them, for instance, may be seen in the "Infiolata," or Flower-festival, which is celebrated every May in the picturesque town of Genzano that lies over the old crater now filled by the still

* "Mense malas Majo nubere vulgus ait,"—says Ovid.

waters of Lake Nemi. It takes place on the eighth day of the Corpus Domini, and is supposed to receive its name from the popular custom of spreading flowers upon the pavements of the streets so as to represent heraldic devices, figures, arabesques, and all sorts of ornamental designs ; but in fact it seems only a relic of the ancient *Floralia*, or *Ludi Florales*, formerly celebrated in honour of Flora during five days, beginning on the 28th of April and ending on the 2nd of May. The ancient goddess has scarcely changed her name, and under her Catholic baptism of *Madonna dei Fiori* she still presides over these rites ; but the licentiousness which formerly characterized this festival has passed away, and only the fun, the flowers, and the gaiety remain. On this occasion the people are all dressed in their effective costumes,—the girls in bodices and silken skirts, with all their corals and jewels on, and the men with white stockings on their legs, their velvet jackets dropping over one shoulder, and flowers and rosettes in their conical hats. The town is then very gay, the bells clang, the incense steams from the censer in the church, where the organ peals and mass is said, and a brilliant procession marches over the strewn flower-mosaic, with music and crucifixes and Church-banners. Hundreds of strangers, too, are there to look on ; and on the Cesarini Piazza and under the shadow of the long avenues of ilexes that lead to the tower are hundreds of handsome girls, with their snowy *tovaglie* peaked over their heads. The rub and thrum of tambourines and the clicking of castanets are heard, too, as twilight comes on, and the *salterello* is danced by many a group. This is the national Roman dance, and is named from the little jumping step which characterizes it. Any number of couples dance it, though the dance is perfect with two. Some of the movements are very graceful and piquant, and particularly that where one of the dancers kneels and whirls her arms on high, clicking her castanets, while the other circles her

round and round, striking his hands together, and approaching nearer and nearer, till he is ready to give her a kiss, which she refuses. Of course it is the old story of every national dance,—love and repulse, love and repulse, until the maiden yields. As one couple, panting and rosy, retires, another fresh one takes its place, while the bystanders play on the accordion the whirling, circling, never-ending tune of the Tarantella, which would “put a spirit of youth in everything.”

If you are tired of the festival, roam up a few paces out of the crowd, and you stand upon the brink of Lake Nemi. Over opposite, and crowning the height where the little town of Nemi perches, frowns the old feudal castle of the Colonna, with its tall, round tower, where many a princely family has dwelt and many an unprincely act has been done. There, in turn, have dwelt the Colonna, Borgia, Piccolomini, Cenci, Frangipani, and Braschi, and there the descendants of the last-named family still pass a few weeks in the summer. On the Genzano side stands the castellated villa of the Cesarini Sforza, looking peacefully across the lake at the rival tower which in the old baronial days it used to challenge,—and in its garden pond you may see stately white swans “rowing their way with oary feet” along. Below you, silent and silvery, lies the lake itself,—and rising around it, like a green bowl, tower its richly-wooded banks, covered with gigantic oaks, ilexes, and chestnuts. This was the ancient grove dedicated to Diana, which extended to L’Ariccia; and here are still to be seen the vestiges of an ancient villa built by Julius Cæsar. Here, too, if you trust some of the antiquaries, once stood the temple of Diana Nemorensis,* where human sacrifices were offered, and whose chief-priest, called *Rex Nemorensis*, obtained his office by slaying his predecessor, and reigned

* The better opinion of late seems to be that it was on the slopes of the Val d’Arliccia. But “who shall decide when doctors disagree?”

over these groves by force of his personal arm. Times have indeed changed since the priesthood was thus won and baptized by blood; and as you stand there, and look, on the one side, at the site of this ancient temple, which some of the gigantic chestnut-trees may almost have seen in their youth, and, on the other side, at the campanile of the Catholic church at Genzano, with its flower-strewn pavements, you may have as sharp a contrast between the past and the present as can easily be found.

Other relics of the ancient *Floralia* exist also in various places, and particularly among the mountains of Pistoia, where the people celebrate the return of spring on the first of May, and sing a peculiar song in honour of the month of flowers, called a *Maggio*. On the last evening of April the festivities commence. Bands of young men then gather together, and with singing and music make a procession through the villages and towns. Some carry a leaf-stripped tree, adorned with flowers and lemons, called the *Maio*, and others carry baskets filled with nosegays. These, as they march along, they distribute to the matrons and maids, who, in return, present wine, eggs, and a kind of *jumble* cake, called *Berlingozzo*, cut in rings and decorated with red tassels. Money is also given, all of which is dedicated to masses and prayers for the souls in purgatory. The *Maggi* they sing have existed so long that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, and are as follows:—

“ Siam venuti a salutare
 Questa casa di valore,
 Che s' è fatta sempre onore ;
 E però vogliam cantare—
 Salutiam prima il padrone,
 Poi di casa la sua sposa—
 Noi sappiam ch' egli è in Maremma ;
 Dio lo sa, e ve lo mantenga !”

And also this other:—

“ Or è di maggio, e fiorito è il limone ;
 Noi salutiamo di casa il padrone.
 Or è di maggio, e gli è fiorito i rami ;
 Salutiam le ragazze co' suoi dami.
 Or è di maggio, che fiorito è i fiori ;
 Salutiam le ragazze co' suoi amori.”*

Sometimes in these processions of the *Maggio* the peasants, accompanied by oxen gaily decorated with branches of olive, silken ribbons, sheaves of grain, and silver bells, went through the fields, singing and reciting verses to invoke good luck and full harvests ; and in some places a band of women, preceded by one of their company richly dressed, and called *La Maggia*, made the tour of the town or village, and accepted the gifts which on all sides were then presented in honour of the occasion ; or men and women gaily dressed, and accompanied by music, visited the palaces of the nobility, carrying banners with their arms embroidered or painted on them.

Just as in the time of Athenæus ancient Greek lovers garlanded the doors of Grecian maids, so peasant lovers in Italy used, on the first of May, to go early in the morning to the houses of their *spose*, and plant before the door a branch of

* These may roughly be Englished thus :—

“ We come our salute to bring
 To this brave house and good,
 Whose honour unshaken has stood,
 And therefore we come to sing :
 And first we salute the master,
 And then his excellent wife ;
 We know he's in the Maremma ;
 God grant them a good long life ;”

“ May is come, and the lemon's in bloom ;
 Health to the master here in his home !
 May is come, and the branches swell ;
 Health to the girls, and their lovers as well !
 May is come, and the flowers are in blossom ;
 Health to the girls, with love in their bosom !”

laburnum or olive, or flowering shrub, and sing their *Maggi*; and the maidens and girls with their lovers used to assemble in some grove, and dance and sing together on this festival. One of these *Maggi*, written by Angelo Poliziano, may be found in a collection of songs by him and Lorenzo dei Medici, which is very pretty and graceful. In the frontispiece of the edition of 1568 there is an engraving representing twelve damsels in a ring, holding each other's hands and singing, while beside them stands *La Maggia* with the *Majo* in her hand; and near her, another woman, who is asking for the customary veil. The *Maggio* is as follows:—

Ben venga Maggio
 E 'l gonfalon selvaggio ;
 Ben venga Primavera
 Che ognun par che innamorì ;
 E voi Donzelle a schiera
 Con vostri amadori,
 Che di rose e di fiori
 Ve fate belle il Maggio.

Venite alla frescura
 Delli verdi arboscelli ;
 Ogni bella è sicura
 Fra tanti damigelli ;
 Che le fiere e gli uccelli
 Ardon d' amore il Maggio.

Chi è giovane, chi è bella,
 Deh ! non sia punto acerba,
 Che non si rinnovella
 L' età, come fa l' erba ;
 Nessuna stia superba
 All' amadore il Maggio.

Ciascuna balli e canti
 Di questa schiera nostra ;
 Ecco e' dodici amanti
 Che per voi vanno in giostra ;
 Qual dura allor si mostra
 Farà sfiorire il Maggio.

Per prender le donzelle
Si son gli amanti armati ;
Arrendetive, o belle,
A vostri innamorati !
Rendete i cuor furati,
Non fate guerra il Maggio.

Chi l' altrui core invola,
Ad altri doni il core !
Ma chi è quel che vola ?
E' l' angiolel d' amore
Che viene a far onore
Con voi, donzelle, il Maggio.

Amor ne vien ridendo,
Con rose e gigli in testa ;
E vien a voi caendo,
Fategli, o belle, festa ;
Qual sarà la più presta
A dargli il fior di Maggio ?

Ben venga il peregrino !
Amor che ne comandi ?
Che al suo amante il crino ?
Ogni bella ingrillandi,
Che le zittelle e i grandi
S' innamoran di Maggio.*

* Welcome, May, and welcome, Spring,
With your gonfalons of green,
Waking love in everything
Where your festive shapes are seen.
Maidens, here your hammocks bring,
And, with flowers and roses gay,
Come, adorn yourselves for May.

Come into the cool green shade,
To the leafy grove repair ;
No one need be here afraid,
'Mid so many maidens fair.
Beasts on earth, and birds in air,
All are filled with love by May.

Who is young, and who is fair,
 Let her not be harsh and sour ;
 Youth, once vanished from us, ne'er
 Blooms again as blooms a flower :
 And let no one at this hour
 Nourish a hard heart in May.

Come,—let all our little band
 Join in festive song and dance ;
 Here a dozen lovers stand
 Who for you would break a lance.
 And let none with sneers or taunts
 Spoil for us our merry May.

Here, all around you, lovers stand,
 Ready each his maid to take ;
 Come, surrender heart and hand,
 Yield to them for Love's sweet sake.
 Since your hearts they've stolen, make
 No defensive war in May.

Who has filched another's heart,
 Let her give to him her own ;
 So to steal, who has the art,
 But the angel Love alone ?
 Love, oh damsels, be it known,
 Comes with you to honour May.

Love, who smiling comes and wears
 Roses, lilies, on his brow,
 Here in search of you repairs ;
 Unto him all honour show.
 Who'll be first to give him now,
 Gentle maids, the flower of May ?

Welcome, Love ! oh, pilgrim dear,
 Say what sweet command is thine ?—
 Let each maiden round the hair
 Of her love a garland twine ;
 Young and old, oh maidens, mine,
 Love each other all in May.



CHAPTER VIII.

CAFFÉS AND THEATRES.

ITALIANS are a *caffè*-frequenting and a theatre-going people. No city is so small that it has not its theatre, and no town so insignificant as to be without its *caffè*. As the lion has its jackal, the shark its pilot-fish, the crab its pinna, so the theatre is sure to have its one *caffè* at least stuck to it, and living upon it. The *caffè* is the social exchange of the country towns. There every evening may be seen groups of the middle classes gathered about little marble-topped tables, interchanging small talk in loud voices, playing dominoes, smoking, sipping coffee or *bibite*, and spelling out the little miserable sheets which are the apologies of the government for newspapers, and which contain nothing you wish to know and much you wish not to know. The waiters are always crying out "*Vengo, vengo subito,*" and thrusting with a clash metal trays, covered with cups and glasses, on to marble tables. The visitors are as constantly crying out for the "*bottega*" (for so the waiter is euphuistically called), and rapping on the tinkling glasses to attract his attention. In Rome, the number of *caffès* is legion; no street is without them; and each of these has its special class of regular customers. There is the *Caffè dei Scacchi*, where chess-players go and discuss this game theoretically and practically; the *Caffè of the Liberali*, who show their liberal

views principally by going there and speaking *sotto voce*; the Caffè of the *Codini*, where queues and tricorned black hats gather, and speak in louder and more assured tones; the Caffè Nazzari, where strangers meet and pay a third more than is paid elsewhere, simply because they are strangers; and the Caffè Greco, where artists meet and discuss subjects of art, pictures, and statues, read the French newspapers and Galignani, and fill the air of the crowded little rooms with tobacco-smoke. There you may see every night representatives of art from all parts of the world, in all kinds of hats, from the conical black felt, with its velvet-ribbon, to the stiff French stove-pipe; and in every variety of coat, from the Polish and German nondescript, all befrogged and tagged, to the shabby American dress-coat, with crumpled tails; and with every cut of hair and beard, from that of Peter the Hermit, unkempt and uncut, to the moustache and pointed beard of Anthony Vandyck. Peeping in there, one is sometimes tempted to consider philosophically what innate connection there is between genius for art and long uncombed hair and untidy beards. This question I have never answered satisfactorily to myself, and I recommend the subject to some German friend, who will go to the root of the matter.

The *caffè* and theatre are to the mass of Italians of the present day what the *logge* were to their ancestors in the great days of Tuscany. In the public *logge* the people met and discussed their affairs as on a social or political exchange. But times have changed, and the *caffè* has usurped the place of those magnificent old *logge*, which still form so striking a feature of many of the Italian cities. The people who thronged under the noble arches of Orgagna's "Loggia dei Lanzi," at Florence, now meet at Doney's, and have surrendered the place to the Perseus of Cellini, the Rape of the Sabines by Giovanni di Bologna, and other aged companions in marble and bronze. So, too, at Siena, opposite

to the "Casino Nobile," whose *loggia*, rich with carving and statues, forms one of the most imposing features of that curious mediæval city, stands the Caffè Greco of to-day, and disputes precedence with it successfully.

In like manner, the *loge* at the theatre has taken the place of the private *loggia* which was once attached to every noble's palace, and beneath whose shade the *Signoria* received their friends in summer and transacted their business. Some of these *logge* were celebrated for their social amusements and for the sharpness of their epigrams, scandal, and satire. At some, gambling was carried on to such excess that the government at last was forced to interfere and prohibit the practice. Others again, as the "Loggia degli Agolanti," achieved a reputation for match-making, so that it was said of it, "*Si potea star sicuro di non far casaccia lì*"—"One may be sure of not making a bad match there." Such was the number of happy marriages there arranged that the site of the house received at last the name of the "*Canto del Parentado*"—"The marriage corner." At the "Loggia dei Rucellai," on the contrary, the leading spirits of the age met to discuss questions of politics and philosophy. There, too, were hatched dangerous plots against the state. The master mind of all who frequented the gardens and Loggia dei Rucellai was Niccolò Macchiavelli, who in the shadow of his own private convictions, unknown then as now, discussed in the *côterie* there assembled the principles which have given so sinister a character to his name. Here also might be seen Jacopo Pitti, the senator, and author of the "*Istoria Fiorentina*," together with his fellow-historian and senator, Filippo de' Nerli, to whom Macchiavelli dedicated his lines on Opportunity, and to whose family Dante alludes in these lines:—

"E vidi quel de' Nerli e quel del Vecchio
Esser contenti alla pella scoperta,
E le sue donne al fuso ed al penneccio."

This garden still exists under the name of the Orti Orcellari, though the voices of the past are heard there no more. And should any wandering ghost by chance revisit his old haunts, he would surely be scared away by the shrill whistle of the locomotive as it rattles through them on its way from Florence to Pistoia.

But if those famous assemblies no longer meet at the *logge* to talk scandal, make visits, arrange matches, and discuss politics, modern society in Rome meets for similar purposes in the *loge* of the theatre. And here the various classes are distinguished and separated by different theatres, as well as different tiers in the same theatre. To the Italians, not only "all the world's a stage," but every stage is a world. For high and low, rich and poor, prince and peasant, there is a theatre; and no one need deprive himself of this amusement so long as he has two *baiocchi* in his pocket. First, comes the Apollo, or Tor di Nona Theatre, which is exclusively devoted to the opera and the masked balls of Carnivals; then follow the Valle and Aliberti, where prose and music alternate, and the drama is played by an excellent company; the Argentina, which is a degree lower, and dedicated to comedy, farce, and a second-rate opera; the Capranica, where melodrama raves, and jugglery throws its highest balls; and the little Metastasio, where tragedy and comedy are performed, sometimes by a French, and sometimes by an Italian company. Besides these, are theatres of a lower grade for the people: the Vallino, where one can hear quite tolerable acting, in a small, but clean house, for five *baiocchi*, and where actors make their *début* in Rome, and train for the higher boards; the Emiliano in the Piazza Navona, where puppets perform; and last, and lowest of all, the Fico, which is frequented solely by the lowest classes.

The prices of a seat vary very much, and depend not only on the theatre but on the season. The amusement is, however, cheap; even at the largest and most fashionable

a numbered seat in the pit only costs three *pauls* (thirty cents), and a box, holding four or five persons comfortably, may be ordinarily obtained for two or three *scudi* the night, or from fifty to sixty *scudi* the season. The boxes in all the theatres are completely separated from each other by partitions from floor to ceiling, and must be taken entire, no single seats being sold in them, as in the French and American theatres, where the tiers are open.

The Apollo, or, as it is commonly called, the Tor di Nona, is the most fashionable theatre in Rome, and here alone, of all the Roman theatres, full dress is required. The second tier of boxes, called the *ordine nobile*, is occupied exclusively by the nobility, ambassadors, and ministers, who have the right of choice, according to their rank, and precedency of title and appointment. The distribution of boxes among them is, it may well be imagined, anything but easy, and the *impresario* is often put to his wits' end to satisfy the demands of all. As the practice is not to vary the opera every evening, but to give only a fixed number of operas during the season, and to repeat the same for many consecutive nights, a box every night is not generally desired by any one, and it is the custom to take only a half or quarter box. By this is intended, however, not a portion of a box every night, but a whole box for one or two nights out of every four. By this arrangement, quarter boxes may be taken at several theatres for the same price that a whole box would cost at one, and the amusement is in this way varied. The first and third nights are generally taken by the nobility, and for these there is a great struggle among those who are not originally entitled to them, great diplomacy being used to obtain them, and heart-burnings often following want of success.

Not only the *ordine nobile* is *abonné* for the season, but also the principal boxes in the other tiers, and many of the seats in the pit. When the company is good, and the operas

promised are favourites, the best boxes and seats are all taken before the season commences. The *abonnés* of the pit are young men about town—artists, shopkeepers, and generally any single person, from the *guardia nobile* to the barber. No lady sits in the pit or *parquet*, and if one be seen there she is at once recognised as a stranger, not aware of the etiquette of a Roman theatre. She will, however, be always treated with courtesy, and will never imagine from the bearing of the people towards her that she is out of place. Women of the lower classes in Rome are constantly seen there. The great mass, however, are men, who in the intervals between the acts are levelling with white-gloved hands the opera-glasses they have hired at the door at all the boxes from floor to ceiling. During the performance they have a vile custom of humming audibly the airs which are sung on the stage, keeping about a note ahead of the singer, as if they were prompting. But this does not seem to annoy their neighbours, unless the latter happen to be strangers or accidental visitors. The seats here are narrow, hard, uncushioned, and by no means comfortable, but the Italians neither complain of this, nor of the terrible smoke of oil-lamps, which have not yet given way to gas in some of the theatres. There is this odd peculiarity among Italians, that though they are not sensitive to bad odours, such as the smoke of an oil-lamp, the hot, thick human odour of a crowd, or the reek of garlic, yet they have a general dislike to what we call “perfumes,” which they rarely use, and are fastidious even about the scent of flowers, which they consider to be neither agreeable nor wholesome in a close room. If you have foolishly (for the Italians are right in this) placed a bouquet of flowers in your sleeping-room, it is nine chances to one that your chamber-maid will throw it at once out of the window, without even consulting you.

It is not ordinarily difficult to procure a box for a night at any of the theatres, unless there be some very unusual

attraction, for whenever the owners of boxes have other engagements for the evening, as it happens to a certain number nightly, they send the key of their box to the office to be sold on their account ; and, on even a night of special interest, the houses are so large that it is rare to find all the boxes on the second and third tiers occupied.

The boxes are ill-furnished, with common straw-bottomed chairs without arms, sometimes a mirror, and generally a velvet cushion in front on which to rest the elbow or arm or to place the opera-glass ; no carpets are on the brick floors which, in the winter season, numb one's feet with cold. One of the servants of the theatre, however, always comes to the box to offer footstools, for the use of which he asks a few *baiocchi*. But comfort is not an Italian word, nor an Italian thing ; and if you are dissatisfied, and begin to grumble at the desolate and cold boxes, and contrast it with the cushioned and carpeted ones at home, please to pause and count the cost of that comfort, and remember, that here you pay three sixpences and there a guinea to hear the same singers. I was never so struck by this as once on coming from Italy into France. I had just been hearing the "Trovatore" sung by the *troupe*, in which were Beau-cardé, Penco, and Goggi, for whom it was written ; and when the season came on in Paris nearly the same company were advertised to sing the same opera there. I was inclined to hear them again, but after having heard them six months before for three pauls, I experienced a decided sense of unwillingness to pay ten francs for identically the same singing, merely because my seat was an arm-chair well-padded and covered with velvet. So, too, after for years purchasing the privilege of listening to Ristori and Salvini for two pauls and a half, or a shilling English, I rebelled in London against paying half a guinea for the same thing ; the chair in this case being scarcely more comfortable, and the house much more close and stuffy.

Once in Florence, being at a loss how to amuse myself for the evening, I determined to go to one of the little theatres, where I had heard that there was a good tenor singer and by no means a bad company. I found, certainly, no luxury there; the scenery was bad, the orchestra meagre; but I heard Beucardé sing in the "Sonnambula," and paid a half-paul for the entertainment. A cup of coffee and roll at Doney's, and a cigar after that, finished my evening, which I had particularly enjoyed, and on counting up the cost, I found I had only expended a paul for both opera and supper. I think I never had so much for so little money.

With the French, English, and Americans, the opera is an exotic, for which one must pay dearly. In Italy it is common as oil and wine, and nearly as cheap. The discomfort naturally goes with the cheapness, but is amply compensated for by it. The scale of everything connected with its expenses is low; the actors and singers have small salaries, the orchestra get a few pauls apiece, and nobody makes a fortune out of it; but the people have a cheap amusement, and this is an enormous gain.

All the world goes to the theatre; it is an amusement which never tires the Italians; and despite the heats of summer and the cold of winter the boxes and pit are always well filled. Nothing short of a revolution would empty them. Once, however, during the year 1848, being at Naples, I agreed with a friend to pass the evening at the San Carlino, celebrated for its humorous and admirable acting. On our arrival at the door we found a crowd gathered in the piazza talking excitedly together, and evidently in agitated expectation of something. On inquiry, we found there had been an outbreak among the *lazzaroni* during the afternoon; and though it was at once suppressed, there was some fear lest another disturbance might arise, and the troops again fire on the people as they had done only a week before. The orchestra, actors, and all the super-

numeraries were collected in the piazza and around the door, and we said to each other, "There will be no representation to-night, of course." Our doubts were, however, speedily dispelled by the ticket-seller, who answered our inquiries as to whether there was to be a performance, by a "*Sicuro, sicuro; favorisca. Che posto vuole?*"—"Certainly, certainly; be kind enough to come in. What seats?" So we purchased our tickets and went in. The theatre was quite dark, only one or two tallow-candles burning on the stage and in the orchestra seats. Not a human being was to be seen. We looked at our watches; the time for the commencement of the play had passed; and, after waiting five minutes, we determined that there would be no performance, and sallied forth to retake our money and surrender our tickets at the door. The ticket-holder, however, strenuously insisted that the performance was to take place. "*Non dubitino, Signori. Sì farà, sì farà. Favoriscano.*"—"Do not doubt. There will certainly be a performance. Please to walk in." Then with a loud shriek he sent his voice into the piazza to summon the director and the actors, who, with unwilling steps, came up to the door, shrugged their shoulders, and said, "*Eh!*" But the director bowed in the politest manner to us, assuring us that there would be a performance, and *favorisca'd* us back into our seats. It was as black as ever. In a few minutes, however, the curtain dropped; one lamp after another was lighted; the orchestra straggled in, urged forward by some one in authority who bustled about and ordered right and left. In about ten minutes matters were completely arranged; the orchestra took their seats and began to play. We looked round the theatre and found that we constituted the entire audience. At first we felt rather awkwardly, but expected every moment to see the seats fill. No one, however, came in. At last up went the curtain, and the play began to us as regularly as if the theatre were thronged. Vainly we pro-

tested ; the actors enjoyed the joke, played their best, and made low bows in recognition of the plaudits which the whole audience, consisting of Nero and myself, freely bestowed upon them. Never did I see better acting. Nor did the joke wear out. The curtain fell after the first act, and we were still alone. We made a renewed protest, which had no effect ; save that a couple of boys, probably engaged behind the scenes, were sent into the pit ; and thus the whole play was performed. When the curtain finally dropped there were only about fifteen persons in the house, and they, as far as we could judge, belonged to the theatre, and came in to enjoy the joke. I doubt whether a complete performance ever was given before or after at any theatre to an audience consisting of two persons, for the sum of one piastre ; nor do I believe that even at the San Carlino, renowned as it is, more humorous and spirited acting was ever seen.

At the first night of the season at the opera it is a point of etiquette for all the proprietors of the boxes to be present ; and a brilliant spectacle it is, the house being uniformly crowded, and every one in an elegant toilette. On this occasion the *impresario* sends ices and refreshments round to all the boxes.

Instead of receiving at home, the Romans generally receive in their *loge* at the opera. Each family takes a box, and as only two or three of the chairs are occupied, there is ample accommodation for visitors. No entrance fee is required except for the pit, and no expense is therefore incurred in making a visit from the outside. A large collection of friends and acquaintances is always to be found in the theatre ; and these lounge about from one box to another to pay visits and to laugh and chat together, not only between the acts, but during the performance. Every *palco* is in itself a private *conversazione*, the members of which are constantly changing. Each new visitor takes a place beside the lady,

and yields it in turn to the next comer. Often there are five or six visitors all animatedly talking together, and amusing themselves in a most informal way—the music all the while being quite disregarded, and serving merely as accompaniment. The same attention to the opera itself cannot of course be expected from those who have heard it night after night as would be given were it fresh and new. The inferior portions are therefore seldom listened to; but when the *prima donna*, *tenore*, or *basso*, advances to sing a favourite air, *scena*, or concerted piece, all is hushed to attention. The husband is rarely to be seen in his box when other visitors are there—taking then the opportunity to slip out and make his round of visits.

The body of the house is illuminated solely by a chandelier, the chief light being concentrated on the stage. The interior of the box is consequently so dark that one may shrink back into it, so as to be entirely concealed from view, and take coffee or ices (furnished from the *caffè* close by), or press his mistress's hand, and whisper love into her ear, "untalked of and unseen." Connected with the private box of Prince Torlonia is an interior one, handsomely furnished, where friends may lounge and chat at their ease and take refreshments. All the other boxes are single.

Much as the Italians like the opera, they like the ballet still more. This is often interpolated between the acts of the opera, so that they who do not wish to stay to a late hour may enjoy it. The moment the curtain draws up and the ballet commences all is attention; talking ceases, *lorgnettes* are levelled everywhere at the stage, and the delight with which the *mimi* and the dancers are watched is almost childish. The Italian ballet-dancers are generally heavy and handsome; and, though they want lightness of movement and elegance of limb, they make up for it by the beauty of their faces and busts. This heaviness of make is, however, peculiar to the Romans. In the north they are

slenderer and lighter. As Italy gives the world the greatest singers, so it supplies it with the most fascinating dancers. Ferraris, Carlotta Grisi, Rosati, Cerito, and Fuoco, are all Italian.

They are even more remarkable as pantomimic actors, or *mimi* as they are called here. The language of signs and gestures comes to them, like Dogberry's reading and writing, by nature. What the northern nations put into words the Italians express by gestures. Their shrugs contain a history; their action is a current commentary and explanation of their speech. Oftentimes they carry on conversations purely in pantomime, and it is as necessary for a stranger to learn some of their signs as to study his dictionary and grammar. The *lazzaroni* at Naples cheat you before your face in the simplest way by this language of signs; and, passing each other in their *calessino*, they have made an agreement to meet, informed each other where they are going, what their fare pays, given a general report of their family, and executed a commission, by a few rapid gestures. No Italian ever states a number without using his fingers, or refuses a beggar without an unmistakable movement of the hand. This natural facility in pantomime is strikingly shown at the institution in Rome for the education of the deaf and dumb. Comparatively little is done by the tedious process of spelling; but a whole vocabulary of gestures, simple, intelligible, and defined, serves these mutes as a short-hand language. The rapidity with which they talk, and the ready intelligence they show in their conversation, is surprising. Their communications are often more rapid than speech, and it is seldom that they are driven to the necessity of spelling. The head of this establishment, who is a priest, has devoted himself with much zeal and skill to the education of these poor unfortunates, and they seemed greatly to have profited by his instruction. But what struck me more than anything else, was the simple and ingenious system of pan-

tomimic conversation adopted, and, I believe, invented by him.

The mimetic performances on the Italian stage are remarkable. The *mimi* seem generally to prefer tragedy or melodrama; and certainly they “tear a passion to rags” as none but Italians could. Nothing to them is impossible. Grief, love, madness, jealousy, and anger, convulse them by turns. Their hands seem wildly to grasp after expression; their bodies are convulsed with emotion; their fingers send off electric flashes of indignation; their faces undergo violent contortions of passion; every nerve and muscle becomes language; they talk all over, from head to foot:—

“Clausis faucibus, eloquenti gestu,
Nutu, crure, genu, manu, rotatu.”

In this love of pantomimic acting, the modern Italians are the blood descendants of their Roman ancestors. The ancient pantomimists were both dancers and mimics. Generally, though not always, they performed to music, expressing by gestures alone their meaning; and from their universal and perfect representation of everything they received their name of *Pantomimi*.*

Their art, though of very ancient origin, attained its perfection in the age of Augustus; and this emperor, out of regard to “*Mæcenas atavis edite regibus*,” who was a great admirer of a celebrated pantomimist named Bathyllus, often honoured his performances by his imperial presence, and thus gave great vogue to this entertainment. It is indeed contended by some writers that these pantomimic dances were invented by Pylades and Bathyllus in the reign of Augustus, there being no anterior record of them discoverable. But this is at least doubtful.† Sometimes a single

* Sidon. Apollin. in Narbon. Suetonius in Calig., c. 54, et in Neron, ch. xvi. 54. Aristot. Poet. sub. init.

† See Tacitus, Ann. i. 54.

actor performed all the characters, as it would seem from the account given by Lucian of a skilful pantomimist in the time of Nero, who, to persuade a Cynical philosopher averse to these performances, showed such skill in his representation as to elicit from the Cynic the declaration, that "he seemed to see the thing itself, and not an imitation of it, and that the man spoke with his body and hands."

The people were mad for this entertainment and often fell in love with the actors, and after the performance was over fell upon their necks, and not only kissed them, but also their *thyrsi* and dresses. Galen relates a story of a female patient whose sole disease was a violent passion for the pantomimist Pylades, conceived only through seeing him act. The public favour for these actors was participated in by the Court to such an extent, that when the Emperor Constantius drove out of the city all the philosophers on account of the dearness of the "*annonæ*," he allowed three thousand dancers and as many pantomimists to remain—at which Ammianus Marcellinus cannot restrain his indignation. The prices paid them were enormous, and Seneca was greatly scandalized by the fact that twenty thousand crowns of gold were given to one of these female dancers on her marriage. Some of them were known to leave fortunes of three hundred thousand crowns, after living in the greatest luxury all their lives. The profession seems to have been as lucrative then as now; and some of the old stories show the same madness for the ancient dancers that in our days we have seen and felt, perhaps, for Fanny Ellsler and Cerito.

The art of the ancient pantomimists was not confined to the theatre, but at dinners and festive entertainments the meats were carved by actors, who, flourishing their knives, performed this service with dancing and gesticulation to the sound of music. To them Juvenal alludes in these lines :—

“Structorem interea ne qua indignatio desit,
Saltantem spectès et chironomonta volante
Cultello.”

Such men as Cicero raised in Rome the dignity of actors, and gave repute to the genius of Æsopus and Roscius. The latter actor obtained such a hold of the Roman people, and became such a favourite, that he received a thousand *denarii* every day that he performed ; while Æsopus left his son a fortune of two hundred thousand *sesterces* acquired solely by his profession.

An example of the pantomimic plays is furnished by Apuleius (l. 10, Miles, p. 233), in which he gives a full description of a performance where the whole story of the Judgment of Paris was told by dance and gesture. Not only stories of this character were danced, but also tragic histories and incidents ; and Appianus Alexandrinus mentions a pantomime play founded on the slaughter of Crassus and the destruction of his army by the Parthians.

Even the emperors did not always occupy the seats of spectators, but joined in the acting ; and Suetonius relates that Nero, when labouring under a severe disease, made a vow, in case of his recovery, to dance the story of Turnus in the Æneid.

Ferrarius, who has written a learned dissertation on this subject,* asserts that in his time (1719) vestiges of these pantomimes still existed in Italy almost in their ancient form ; and that certain dances performed in Lombardy by the *Mattaccini* were merely the old pantomimic dances of the *Luperci*. These dancers were clothed in a tight-fitting dress completely showing their figures, and wore the mask of an old man with a prominent chin and no beard. They ran through the streets dancing, holding their hands to their foreheads, and beating the persons they met with “*ecourgées*,”

* De Mimis et Pantomimis Dissertatio, 1714. See also Nicolaus Calliachus, De Ludis Scenicis.

like the ancient *Luperci*. They were very agile, running before carriages when at full speed, climbing up walls of houses, and entering through windows. They counterfeited various trades, such as those of barber and shoemaker, and performed mock combats, in which, after a certain time, one would fall and pretend to be dead, on which his comrade would lift him up and carry him off dancing. Apropos of this, Ferrarius tells a story of two young men who fell in love with the same girl. One of them finally won her hand, and on the day of his wedding, while surrounded by his friends, he was visited by a company of persons in masks pretending to be *Mattaccini*, who at once began to dance. One of these approached the bridegroom and whispered in his ear, when he at once arose and without suspicion mixed in the masquerade. After dancing with them, he engaged in a feigned combat with one of the party, and finally, pretending to be killed, dropped down as if dead, according to the usual custom of this dance. The others immediately lifted him up and carried him off on their shoulders into a neighbouring chamber, dancing to a sad air as if they were attending a funeral. The jest was admirable, and all the company were much diverted. But after the dancers had all disappeared the bridegroom did not return, and his guests, finally becoming alarmed, sought for him in the chamber where he had been carried by the *Mattaccini*, and there they found him on the floor—dead—strangled by his rival, who had been one of the dancers.

For these pantomimic performances the Italians show their ancient madness. An inferior opera they will bear with tolerable patience, but they know not how to put up with the disappointment of a bad ballet and pantomime. In both, however, they are severe but just critics, and express their disapprobation at false singing or inferior execution in the openest way; sometimes by loud laughter, and sometimes by remorseless hissing, Many a time have

I seen them stop a bad performance by strong expressions of displeasure, such as crying out to the *impresario*, jeering the unfortunate actor, and at times refusing to allow him to proceed in his part. This is more intelligible when it is considered that the audience are for the most part *abonnés* for the season, and cannot revenge themselves on the offending person by withdrawing from all future representations—for by so doing they would merely throw away at once their money and their amusement. When therefore, an actor or singer does not please them, they let the *impresario* know the fact very unmistakably, and he always has the good sense to remove the offence. When it is the play or the opera itself to which they object, they await the falling of the curtain in the *entr'acte*, or at the close of the piece, and then assail it with a storm of hisses and groans.

With equal enthusiasm they express their satisfaction at an admirable performance or with a favourite actor or singer. Repetitions, however, are not generally allowed in the opera, and "*Bis, bis*," meets with no other result than renewed courtesies and bows. When the curtain falls, if they are particularly pleased, loud cries of "*Fuori, fuori*" (out, out) are heard, which the main actors or singers acknowledge by making their appearance again with bows and courtesies. This is sometimes repeated, when they are greatly pleased, as many as six or eight times. It is so constant a practice, that, to save the necessity on such occasions of raising the whole drop scene, a large opening is cut in the centre, with flying curtains on either side, through which the actors enter to answer the congratulations and bravos of the audience.

Nothing can be either published or performed in Rome without first submitting to the censorship, and obtaining the permission of the "*Custodes morum et rotulorum*." Nor is this a mere form; on the contrary, it is a severe ordeal, out of which many a play comes so mangled as scarcely to be

recognisable. The pen of the censor is sometimes so ruthlessly struck through whole acts and scenes that the fragments do not sufficiently hang together to make the action intelligible, and sometimes permission is absolutely refused to act the play at all. In these latter days the wicked people are so ready to catch at any words expressing liberal sentiments, and so apt to give a political significance to innocent phrases, that it behoves the censor to put on his best spectacles. Yet such is the perversity of the audience, that his utmost care often proves unavailing, and sometimes plays are ordered to be withdrawn from the boards after they have been played by permission.

The same process goes on with the *libretti* of the operas ; and although Rome has not yet adopted the custom first introduced by that delicate-minded guardian of public morals, King Ferdinand of Naples, surnamed Bomba, of obliging the ballet-dancers to wear long blue drawers and pantalets, yet some of its requirements recall the fable of the ostrich, which, by merely hiding its head, fondly imagines it can render its whole body invisible. In this way they have attempted to conceal the offence of certain well-known operas, with every air and word of which the Romans are familiar, simply by changing the title and the names of the characters, while the story remains intact. Thus, certain scandalous and shameful stories attaching to the name of Alexander VI. and to the family of the Borgia, the title of Donizetti's famous opera of "Lucrecia Borgia," which every *gamin* of Rome can sing, has been altered to that of "Elena da Fosco," and under this name alone is it permitted to be played. In like manner, "I Puritani" is whitewashed into "Elvira Walton;" and in the famous *duo* of *Suoni la tromba*, the words *gridando libertà* become *gridando lealtà*. This amiable government also, unwilling to foster a belief in devils, rebaptizes "Roberto il Diavolo" into "Roberto in Picardia," and conceals the name of

“William Tell” under that of “Rodolfo di Sterlink.” “Les Huguenots,” in the same way, becomes in Rome “Gli Anglicani,” and “Norma” sinks into “La Foresta d’ Irminsul.” Yet, notwithstanding this, the principal airs and concerted pieces are publicly sold with their original names at all the shops.

Of the theatres for the drama the best is the Valle, where there is generally an admirable company. The Italians are good actors, and entirely without that self-consciousness and inflated affectation which are the bane of the English stage. Everything with us is exaggerated and pompous. We cannot even say “How do you do?” without mouthing. There is no vice against which Hamlet warns the players that is not rampant in our theatres. The Italians, on the contrary, are simple and natural. Their life, which is public, out of doors, and gregarious, gives them confidence, and by nature they are free from self-consciousness. The same absence of artificiality that marks their manners in life is visible on their stage. One should, however, understand the Italian character, and know their habits and peculiarities, in order fitly to relish their acting. It is as different from the French acting as their character is different from that of the French. While at the Théâtre Français, in Paris, one sees the most perfect representation of artificial life, society, manners, and dress,—on the Italian stage there is more passion, tenderness, pathos, and natural simplicity. In high comedy, where the scene is in the artificial sphere of fashionable life, the French are decidedly superior to all other people; but where the interest of the piece is wholly apart from toilette, etiquette, and mode (three very French words and things), the Italians are more natural and affecting. They generally seem quite unconscious of their audience, and one, at times, might easily imagine himself to be looking into a room, of which, without the knowledge of the occupant, one wall is broken down. There is none of that constant advancing to

the footlights, and playing to the pit, which is so unpleasant a characteristic of the English stage. The tone of the dialogue is conversational, the actors talk to each other and not to the house, and in their movements and manners they are as easy and *nonchalant* as if they were in the privacy of their own home. In tragedy their best actors are very powerful; but ordinarily speaking their playing is best in affecting drama of common life, where scope is given to passion and tenderness. In character-parts, comedy and farce too, they are admirable; and out of Italy the real *buffo* does not exist. Their impersonations, without overstepping the truth of natural oddity, exhibit a humour of character and a genial susceptibility to the absurd which could scarcely be excelled. Their farce is not dry, witty, and sarcastic, like the French, but rich, and humorous, and droll. The *primo comico*, who is always rushing from one scrape to another, is so full of chatter and blunder, ingenuity, and good nature, that it is impossible not to laugh with him and wish him well; while the heavy father or irascible old uncle, in the midst of the most grotesque and absurdly natural imitation, without altering in the least his character, will often move you by sudden touches of pathos when you are least prepared. The old man is particularly well represented on the Italian stage. In moments of excitement and emotion, despite his red bandanna handkerchief, his spasmodic taking of snuff, and his blowing of his nose, all of which are given with a truth which, at first, to a stranger, trenches not slightly on the bounds of the ludicrous,—look out—by an unexpected and exquisitely natural turn he will bring the tears at once into your eyes. I know nothing so like this suddenness and unexpectedness of pathos in Italian acting as certain passages in “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” which catch you quite unprepared, and, expecting to laugh, you find yourself crying.

The system of starring, so destructive to the interests of

the drama, is unknown in Italy. The actors are enrolled into dramatic companies by the various *impresarii*, and, instead of being changed every season, are engaged for years at annual salaries, with an agreement to travel abroad at their will on certain established conditions. The different actors in a *troupe* thus become habituated to each other's playing, and an effect is produced which could result from no other system. As each one has his own special class of characters, his *rôle* in every play naturally determines itself, and jealousies and heart-burnings are thereby to a great extent avoided. In this way Ristori and Salvini were engaged, and for years made the circuit of the principal cities in Italy with the company to which they belonged. Season after season the same company returned to the Teatro Valle at Rome; and here Ristori made herself a warm favourite among the Romans long before she left Italy to win a European fame. Many and many a time in '48 and '49 have I seen her act on the boards of this theatre. Her *rôle* then was principally in comedy, in which she was more admirable than in tragedy, and in such parts as the Locandiera of Goldoni she had no equal. At this period, too, I remember with special delight her acting in the character of Elmire, in Molière's "Tartuffe." Indeed the company to which she was attached performed this play with a perfection I never again expect to see; and, after which, the traditional acting of it, at the Théâtre Français, good as it was, was a disappointment. Tartuffe is essentially an Italian part. He cannot be understood in Paris as in Rome, where he daily walks the street; and the Tartuffe of the Roman interregnum of '48 was the most terrible satire on the priestcraft, and the most perfectly true to nature in all its details that could be seen. How the audience and the actors relished it! what enthusiasm there was in those days! Since the return of the Pope from Gaeta, Tartuffe is banished from the stage, if not from Rome.

Ristori was at this time in the very flower of her youth, and a more beautiful person one could not easily see, even in Italy. It was not until she had become a little *passée* for La Locandiera that she took to tragedy and made her visit to France. Since then her whole style has changed, and she does not please the Romans so much as in her earlier days. She is now more stately, elaborate, and calculated in her art; then she was more simple, natural, and impulsive. She has been within the circle of Rachel, and has felt her influence, though she is in nowise her imitator. Comedy she rarely plays; but in tragedy she is a great actress—greater than she could have been in those earlier days. One is always tempted to compare her with Rachel; but they are very different in their powers. Rachel was a *Lamia*—a serpent woman—and her greatness was in the representation of wicked and devilish passions. Love and tenderness were beyond her faculties; but rage, revenge, and all demoniac emotions she expressed with unequalled power. In scenes of great excitement that pale slender figure withed like a serpent; and the thin arm and hand seemed to crawl along her rich draperies, and almost hiss, so subtle and wonderfully expressive was its movement. What a face and figure she had, capable of expressing all the venom of the characters she loved to play! Ristori, on the contrary, excels in the representation of the more womanly and gentle qualities. Her acting is more of the heart—love, sorrow, noble indignation, passionate desire, heroic fortitude, she expresses admirably. In the terrible parts of Myrra and Medea an infinite grief and longing possess her. The horror of the deed is obscured by the pathos of the acting and the exigencies of the circumstances. Rachel seemed to joy in the doing of horrible acts; Ristori to be driven to them by violent impulses beyond her power to control. Her Medea is as affecting as it is terrible; her Judith, so heroic and inspired, that you forget her deed in the self-sacrifice and

love of country which prompted it. Bravely as she carries herself, there is always apparent an undercurrent of womanly repulsion which she is forced to overcome by great resolution.

At the Valle, also, Salvini has played for consecutive years as a member of the Dondini corps, both before and since his triumphs in France and England have won for him a European name. Here too, years ago, Modena might be seen, before his liberalism and love of country exiled him from Italy after the sad reverses of '48, and deprived the stage of the greatest of Italian actors. I had never the good fortune to see him but once, but then he performed one of his great parts, that of Louis XI. His representation of this wicked, suspicious, sensual, and decrepit old king was terrible for its power and truth to nature. Though a young man, his "make up" was so artistic, that, even by the aid of a strong opera-glass, it was impossible to believe that he was painted. There were the seamy parchment forehead, the deeply-channelled cheeks, the dropping jaw, rheumy eyes, and silvery blotched complexion of eighty; his back was curved, one shoulder higher than the other, and the whole frame marked with infirmity; his walk was stiff and cramped, his gesture spasmodic, his hands trembling and clutching constantly at his dress; his voice was weak and harsh, and in violent paroxysms of passion, when most actors, forgetting their feigned weakness, raise their voice, his tones became extinguished and convulsive, bursting only now and then into a wiry scream. Never for a moment did he forget the character he was acting; or rather, so completely had he fused himself into it, that he himself seemed no longer to exist. So ghastly a picture of blasted, passionate, and sensual old age, where empty desires had outlived their physical satisfaction, and the violence of internal passions, paralyzing the impotent body, ended in convulsion, I never saw before or after.

Salvini, who is of the same school of acting as Modena, has almost an equal genius. His Saul is a wonderful performance, worthy to stand beside the Louis XI. of Modena. The mixture of rage and insanity in this tormented spirit—his trances when the facts of the world around him disappear before the terrible visions conjured up by his brain—the subsequent intervals of painful weakness and senile sorrow—are expressed as only an actor of great imagination could express them. So, too, his Othello, in another way, is quite as remarkable. The tragedy moves on with an even and constantly accelerating pace from beginning to end. The quiet dignity of the first scenes, where he shows the gentle manliness of his love, and pleads his cause—the turbulent changes of passion when, stung by the poisonous insinuations of Iago, he tortures himself by doubts, and writhes at last in the toils of jealousy and madness—the plaintive sorrow and pathos of his suffering—the fierce savageness of his attack on Iago, when, in a moment of revulsion, he seizes him by the throat, and, flinging him to the ground, towers over him in a tempest of frightful rage—his cruel, bitter taunting of Desdemona, when, wrought upon by Iago, he believes her guilty—and the last fearful scene before the murder, where he bids her confess her sins and pray, are given with a gradation and power, compared with which all English representations seem cold and artificial. Nothing is European in his embodiment of Othello; it is the inflammatory passion of the East bursting forth like fire, and consuming a noble and tortured nature—it is the Moor himself, as Shakespeare drew him.

In the last interview with Desdemona Salvini is wonderful. Like a tiger weaving across his cage, he ranges to and fro along the furthest limits of the stage, now stealing away from her with long strides and avoiding her approaches, and now turning fiercely round upon her and rolling his black eyes, by turns agitated by irresolution, touched by tender-

ness, or goading himself into rage, until at last, like a storm, he seizes her and bears her away to her death. In all this Salvini never forgets that the Moor, though maddened by jealousy, acts on a false notion of justice and not of revenge :—

“ Oh I were damned beneath all depth in hell
But that I did proceed upon *just* grounds
To this extremity.”

After the deed has been accomplished, what can exceed the horror of his ghastly face as he looks out between the curtains he gathers about him when he hears Emilia's knock—or the anguish and remorse of that wild, terrible cry as he leans over her dead body, after he knows her innocence—or the savage rage of that sudden scream with which he leaps upon Iago? But this is the last outburst of passion. Henceforward to the end nothing can be more imposing than Salvini's representation of the broken-hearted Moor. He resumes his original bearing. He is calm in his resolution and dignified in his despair. Nothing remains but death, and he will die as becomes his great nature. His last speech is grand, simple, and calm. After these words—

“ I took by the throat the circumcised dog
And smote him—”

he pauses, raises himself to his full height, and looks proudly round ; then hissing out “ Thus,” he suddenly draws his curved knife across his throat, and falls backward dead.

The Italians at the theatre are like children. The scene represented on the stage is real to them. They sympathize with the hero and heroine, detest the villain, and identify the actor with the character he plays. They applaud the noble sentiments and murmur at the bad. When Othello calls Iago “ honest ” there is a groan over the whole house ; and whenever Iago makes his entrance a movement of de-

testation is perceptible among the audience. Scarcely will they sit quietly in their seats when he kneels with Othello to vow his "wit, hands, heart, to wronged Othello's service," but openly cry out against him. I have even heard them in a minor theatre hiss an actor who represented a melodramatic Barbarossa who maltreated the Italians, giving vent to their indignation by such loud vociferation that the poor actor was forced to apologise by deprecatory gestures, and recall to their minds the fact that he was acting a part. So openly is the sympathy of the audience expressed that it is sometimes difficult to induce an actor to take the villain's *rôle*.

On one occasion I was present at the Cocomero Theatre in Florence, when a French play was performed, founded on the murder of the Duchesse de Praslin. Strong disapprobation was exhibited during the first acts; but when finally the assassin issues from behind the curtain after committing the fatal act, with a bloody dagger in his hand and his clothes stained with blood, the whole audience rose as a single man, and, with a loud groan of disgust, drove the actor from the stage and refused to allow the performance to continue.

It is not three months ago that a new play was brought out at the Corra. The story was one of seduction, drawn from a French plot, but the people would not bear it. "*È infame. È pur troppo questo. È indegno,*" was heard on all sides. Men who might perhaps have secretly followed the course of the seducer in real life were indignant at its representation on the stage. They would not permit art to be dragged down into the filthy kennels of sensual vice. Nor is this solely the case with the stage. Their poetry, their romance, their literature is opposed at all points to that of the French. It may be dull, but it is always decent, always moral. Whatever life may be, art is a sanctuary, and not, as in many French novels of the present day, a neutral ground of assignation and seduction.

When summer comes on and the days grow long there are theatrical representations in the open air at the Mausoleum of Augustus, or, as it is more popularly called, the *Correa*, beginning at five and ending at half-past eight o'clock. The theatre itself is built into the circular walls of the ancient mausoleum of Augustus that fire, siege, and the efforts of barbarians have failed to demolish; and its popular name is founded on the fact that the entrance is through the *cortile* of the *Palazzo Correa*, on the ground floor of which the tickets of admission are sold. You pass through the gloomy archway of this palace, which stands at the lower part of the *Via dei Pontefici*, near the *Tiber*, picking your way over a dirty pavement, which nevertheless, if you examine, you will find to be composed of beautiful fragments of serpentine grimed with filth and age, which once were trodden by the imperial feet of the *Cæsars*; thence issuing into a shabby, irregular *cortile*, you see before you the outer shell of the old mausoleum, with its reticulated brickwork and drapery of vines; and passing on through a doorway, over which is inscribed the words "*Mausoleo d' Augusto*," you ascend two flights of stairs to a landing on the level with the arena, where you give up your ticket. Here your eyes are arrested by a number of marble slabs let into the wall, on which are celebrated, not the visits of emperors and kings, as you expected, but the famous feats of circus riders and actors who have delighted the modern Romans in the arena, and of the wonderful intelligence of the far-famed "*Elefantessa, Miss Babb*." One of these is worth copying for magniloquence:—

"*Cessa la loquace tromba della fama ove non giunga il nome di Giovanni Guillaume, superbo frenatore dei destrieri, cui straordinariamente plaudiva la Città del Tebro nei autunni 1851 e 1852.*"

From this landing we enter at once the circular arena, enclosed within lofty walls and open above to the sky. Five

tiers of brick steps, receding all around to an arcade of sixty-one arches, over which is an open terrace guarded by an iron railing, constitute the permanent seats—and one-half the arcade is divided into private boxes which are sold to the gentry. On one side is erected a covered stage, with curtain, drop-scene, and *coulisses*, and in front of this a portion of the open space of the arena is temporarily railed off and filled with numbered chairs, where the great mass of the audience sit. The price of a seat within this enclosure is fifteen *baiocchi*, but outside the railing and on the brick steps the price is only one *paul*. The boxes in the arcades cost a few *baiocchi* more; but as they are distant from the stage they are but little occupied, except when the arena is used for circus performances, in which case the stage and the railed-off enclosures are removed, and they become the chief places. The outer walls are so high that by five o'clock the arena is quite in shadow, and there one may pass an hour or two most agreeably in the summer afternoon, smoking a cigar and listening often to admirable acting. The air is cool and fresh; there is no vile smell of streaming lamps; the smoke from the cigars ascends into the open sky and disturbs no one; great white clouds drift now and then over you; swallows hurtle above, darting to and fro incessantly in curving flight; and the place is in all respects most enjoyable. If you do not choose to listen, you may stroll outside the railings in the arena, or ascend into the open arcade and chat with your friends. Are you thirsty, you find a subterranean *caffè* beneath the brick steps, with tables spread out before it, where you may order to be brought to you beer, wine, *bibite* of oranges, lemons, syrups of strawberries, cherries, violet, all sorts of *rosolj*, and, if your taste is more craving of excitement, *aqua-vitæ* and *rhum*. Cigar vendors are also wandering about; and between the acts you hear on all sides the cry of "*Sigari, sigari scelti.*" The scenery is very poor, and without the illusion of lamplight everything

looks tawdry ; but, when the acting is good, the imagination supplies the material deficiencies. It is only when the acting is bad that the scenery becomes ludicrous. Given Shakespeare, a blanket will suffice ; but Charles Kean requires all the splendour and pomp of scenic effect as a background. A barrel is a throne for a king ; but Christopher Sly is not a lord even in “the fairest chamber hung round with wanton pictures.”

Now and then a very odd effect takes place. In a scene of passionate emotion, when the lover is on his knees ; when the father is lifting his hands to curse his child ; when the mother is just about to clasp her new-found daughter ; when two rivals are crossing swords—clang, clang, clang, suddenly peal the bells of the neighbourhood, and the actors, whose voices are drowned in the din, are forced to stop and walk about the stage, and wait until the noise ceases. The audience growls and laughs, the actors smile and drop into their real characters, everybody shrugs his shoulders, and not a few say, “*accidente.*” But the grievance is soon over, and the scene goes on.

Sometimes a cloud draws darkening over the sky, and a sudden clap of thunder, with a few large preliminary drops, brings all the audience to their feet, and a general scramble takes place for the covered *loggie*. The play still continues, however, and queer enough is sometimes the aspect of the place. A few venturesome spirits, determined to hear as well as to see, and knowing that the pit is the only really good spot, still bravely keep their places under the green, purple, and brown domes of their umbrellas—others braver than they, who had not had the foresight to bring umbrellas—seize a chair, and turning it upside down, and holding it by one leg, improvise an umbrella. The last spectacle of this kind at which I was present, showed pluck beyond this. At the first drops the greater part of the audience fled to the *loggie*, and there jeered the few who resolutely remained

under their umbrellas. But the rain came heavier and heavier, and threatened to outlast the play, and one by one all left the pit, except a sturdy Englishman of middle age in gold spectacles, and an Italian woman. They had made up their mind never to give it up—and there they stayed alone, and side by side, despite the shouts and laughter of the audience. The woman, after the fashion of her sex, was in crinoline, which was freely exposed as she turned up her skirts to keep them dry. Her feet were planted on the upper rungs of a chair, in front of her, with her knees on a level with her bosom, an inverted chair was spread over her dress, on either side of her, and in her lap was a third, through the rungs of which she had thrust her arms so as to support still a fourth chair above her head, and crouched beneath this, she listened with the greatest calm to the play. At her side, and unwilling to be outdone, sat the Englishman, with his trousers rolled up, and similarly arranged in all respects save that he had a great green umbrella instead of a chair on his head. The pit swam with water, the thunder pealed, the rain poured in torrents; but there, with the utmost *sang froid* they sat, neither turning aside to encourage each other, but both looking stedfastly before them at the stage. At last the cloud broke up, the shower passed over, and the audience began to pour back. The Englishman never moved, until an Italian got before him, and upon the falling of a few supplementary drops seized a chair and held it over his head, so as to impede the Englishman's view of the stage. This human patience could endure no longer. He dropped his great umbrella and gave the Italian obstacle a punch with the great brass ferule in the middle of the back, making signs that he was in his way—whereupon the obstacle shrugged his shoulders and laughed, and moved aside.

Often, before the play is over, the shadows of twilight deepen in the arena, and the stars begin to twinkle over-

head. Then lamps are lighted on the stage and around the theatre, and the contrast of the yellow lights below and the silvery star-points above, in the deep abyss of the sky, is very striking.

As one looks around, in the intervals of the acting, the old reminiscences of the place will sometimes very forcibly strike the mind; and the imagination, running down the line of history with an electric thrill, will revive the ghosts of the old days, and people the place with the shapes of the Cæsars, whose bodies were laid here in solemn burial eighteen hundred years ago. Why should not their spirits walk here after the shadows have begun to fall, and the mists from the river to steal over their tomb? The place is creepy after twilight,—but let us linger a few moments and give a glimpse into the past, or, if you wish to have a sensation, let us walk into one of these damp subterranean passages and raise a spirit or two.

Strabo tells us that this mausoleum, which was built by Augustus to be the last resting-place for the ashes of his family, originally consisted of a huge tumulus of earth, raised on a lofty basement of white marble, and covered to the summit with evergreen plantations in the manner of a hanging garden. On the summit was a bronze statue of Augustus himself, and beneath the tumulus was a large central hall, round which ran a range of fourteen sepulchral chambers, opening into this common vestibule. At the entrance were two Egyptian obelisks, fifty feet in height, and all around was an extensive grove, divided into walks and terraces. In the centre of the plain, opposite to the mausoleum, was the *bustum*, or funeral pile, where the bodies were burnt. This was also built of white marble, surrounded by balustrades, and planted inside with poplars. Its site has been recently ascertained to be close by the church of St. Carlo in Corso. The young Marcellus, whose fate was bewailed by Virgil in lines that all the world knows,

was its first occupant, and after him a long Cæsarian procession laid their ashes in this marble chamber. Here was placed Octavia, the mother of Marcellus, the neglected wife of Anthony, whom Cleopatra caught in her "strong toil of grace." Here lay Agrippa, the builder of the Pantheon and the husband of the profligate Julia; Caius and Lucius, the emperor's nephews; Livia, his well-beloved wife; and beside them, Augustus himself. Here, too, the poisoned ashes of the noble Germanicus were borne from Syria by Agrippina, while crowds of mourning Romans followed her, invoking the gods to spare to them his children. Here the young first Drusus, the pride of the Claudian family, and at his side the second Drusus, the son of Tiberius, were laid. Here the dust of Agrippina, after years of exile and persecution, was at last permitted to repose beside that of her husband Germanicus. Here Nero, and his mother Agrippina, and his victim Britannicus; here Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, and all the other Cæsars down to Nerva, found their burial-place; and then the marble door was closed, for the sepulchral cells were full.

A long blank space now occurs in the history of the mausoleum. Centuries went by, while the ashes of the Cæsars reposed undisturbed in their marble sepulchres. Then came a thunder over their heads; when Alaric, in the fifth century, overwhelmed Rome with his hordes of Visigoths, broke down the gate of the mausoleum, plundered the tombs of the Cæsars, and scattered their ashes to the winds. Wild weeds and ivy then covered with green the ruins of their ravage. Centuries again went by without a change, save that of time, and lizards and serpents slid in and out unmolested. At last the Colonna took possession of it, and rebuilt it into a fortress. But, enraged with their treachery after the repulse of the Romans at Tusculum, the populace destroyed all that was destructible of this great mausoleum. It was too strong for them, however. The

mortar and cement of centuries had hardened to stone. Its massive walls resisted their attacks ; and Montfaucon tells us in his pilgrimage to Rome, in the thirteenth century, that he saw over one of the arches of the mausoleum the funeral inscription of Nerva : “ *Hæc sunt ossa et cinis Nervæ Imperatoris.*”* Again the Colonna occupied them, rebuilt them into a fortress, and there withstood the assaults of Gregory IX.

Then came a day when a new burial took place here. It was of Rome's last tribune. Murdered at the foot of the Capitol, his dead body was dragged thence by the Jews, under the orders of Jugurtha and Sciarretta Colonna, and on the ruins of the mausoleum were seen the first funeral pyre since that of Nerva. Every Jew in Rome was there, feeding with dry thistles the fire that consumed Rienzi's body, and the ashes were blown about by the wind. “ *Così quel corpo fù arso, fù ridotto in polvere e non ne rimase cica.*”†

But Cæsars and tribune are alike vanished, and not a memorial of them remains. The sarcophagus which contained the ashes of Agrippina, daughter of Marcus Agrippa and wife of Germanicus, is one of the few relics which now remain of the pomp of this splendid mausoleum ; and the very stone on which the inscription was graven to her memory was afterwards used as the measure for three hundred-weight of corn. It may still be seen in the court of the Conservators' Palace, on the Capitoline Hill, with the arms of the modern senate sculptured on its side, and beneath an inscription setting forth its “base modern uses.”

This resting-place of Cæsars, this fortress of mediæval princes, was afterwards hollowed out into a vineyard, and Santi Bartoli, in his work on *Gli Antichi Sepolchri*, gives us a picture of it in this state. It was then made into

* Liber de Mirab. Rom. Ap. Montfaucon. *Diarium Italicum*, p. 692.

† “Biography of Rienzi,” by Tommaso Fortioccoa.

a circus for bull-fights, which were only abolished a few years ago ; and now it is devoted to the alternate uses of a circus and a day theatre. Where the grand imperial processions of death once paused, the parti-coloured clown tumbles in the dust, and flinging out both his arms, cries, "*Eccomi quà.*" In the chambers where once were ranged the urns of Augustus and Germanicus, stand rows of bottles containing beer, liquors, and *bibite*; and the only funeral pyres we burn there now are the cigars we smoke, as we look at the play of Julius Cæsar. *Tempora mutantur.*



CHAPTER IX.

THE COLOSSEUM.

QF all the ruins in Rome, none is at once so beautiful, so imposing, and so characteristic as the Colosseum. Here throbbed the Roman heart in its fullest pulses. Over its benches swarmed the mighty population of the centre city of the world. In its arena, gazed at by a hundred thousand eager eyes, the gladiator fell, while the vast *velarium* trembled as the air was shaken by savage shouts of "*Habet*," and myriads of cruel hands, with upturned thumbs, sealed his unhappy fate. The sand of the arena drank the blood of African elephants, lions, and tigers,—of *Mirmillones Laqueatores*, *Retiarii*, and *Andabatae*,—and of Christian martyrs and virgins. Here emperor, senators, knights, and soldiers, the lowest populace and the proudest citizens, gazed together on the bloody games—shouted together as the favourite won, groaned together fiercely as the favourite fell, and startled the eagles sailing over the blue vault above with their wild cries of triumph. Here might be heard the trumpeting of the enraged elephant, the savage roar of the tiger, the peevish shriek of the grave-rifling hyena, while the human beasts above, looking on the slaughter of the lower beasts beneath, uttered a wilder and more awful yell. Rome—brutal, powerful, bloodthirsty, imperial Rome—built in its days of pride this mighty

amphitheatre, and, outlasting all its works, it still stands, the best type of its grandeur and brutality. What St. Peter's is to the Rome of to-day is the Colosseum to the Rome of the Cæsars. The Baths of Caracalla, grand as they are, must yield precedence to it. The Cæsars' palaces are almost level with the earth. Over the pavement where once swept the imperial robes now slips the gleaming lizard ; and in the indiscriminate ruins of these splendid halls the *contadino* plants his potatoes and sells for a *paul* the oxidised coin which once may have paid the entrance fee to the great amphitheatre. The golden house of Nero is gone. The very Forum where Cicero delivered his immortal orations is almost obliterated, and antiquarians quarrel over the few columns that remain. But the Colosseum still stands : despite the assault of time and the work of barbarians, it still stands, noble and beautiful in its decay—yes, more beautiful than ever.

But what a change has come over it since the bloody scenes of the Cæsars were enacted ! A supreme peace now reigns there. Thousands of beautiful flowers bloom in its ruined arches, tall plants and shrubs wave across the open spaces, and Nature has healed over the wounds of time with delicate grasses and weeds. Where, through the *podium* doors, wild beasts once rushed into the arena to tear the Christian martyrs, now stand the altars and stations that are dedicated to Christ. In the summer afternoon the air above is thronged with twittering swallows ; and sometimes, like a reminiscence of imperial times, far up in the blue height, an eagle, planing over it on wide-spread motionless wings, sails silently along.

Here, as you lie, towards twilight, dreaming of the past, upon some broken block of travertine, you will see a procession wending its way between the arches, preceded by a cross-bearer and two acolytes. It is composed of a Franciscan friar in his brown serge and cowl, accompanied by

the religious confraternity of the "Lovers of Jesus and Maria," and followed by a group of women in black, and veiled. They chant together a hymn as they slowly approach the cross planted in the centre of the arena. There they kneel and cry, "*Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus te,*" with the response, "*Quia per sanctam crucem tuam redemisti mundum.*" Then the monk ascends the platform before one of the altars, plants his crucifix beside him, and preaches a sermon. This finished, the procession makes the round of the stations, and again passes out of the arena. As he advances to the first station he chants—

"L' orme sanguigne
Del mio Signore,
Tutto dolore
Seguiterò."

And the people respond :—

"Vi prego, o Gesu buono,
Per la vostra passione
Darmi il perdono !"

It is strange to hear this chant and sermon in a place once dedicated to blood—strange to hear the doctrine of love and forgiveness on the spot where the gladiator fell and the martyr suffered for his faith !

As you dream over this change, the splendour of sunset blazes against the lofty walls, and transfigures its blocks of travertine to brown and massive gold ; the quivering stalks and weeds seem on fire ; the flowers drink in a glory of colour, and show like gems against the rough crust of their setting ; rose clouds hang in the open vault above, under which swift birds flash incessantly, and through the shadowed arches you see long molten bars of crimson drawn against a gorgeous sky beyond. Slowly the great shadow of the western wall creeps along the arena ; the cross in the centre blazes no longer in the sun ; it reaches the eastern

benches, climbs rapidly up the wall, and the glory of sunset is gone. Twilight now swiftly draws its veil across the sky ; the molten clouds grow cool and gray, the orange refines into citron, and pales away to tenderest opaline light, and stars begin to peer through the dim veil of twilight. Shadows deepen in the open arena, block up the arches and galleries, confuse the lines of the benches, and shroud its decay. You rise and walk musingly into the centre of the arena, and, looking round its dim, vast circumference, you suddenly behold the benches as of old, thronged with their myriads of human forms—the ghosts of those who once sat there. That terrible circle of eyes is shining at you with a ghastly expression of cruel excitement. You hear the strange, exciting hum of confused voices, and the roar of wild beasts in the caverns below. You are yourself the gladiator, who must die to make a Roman holiday, or the martyr who waits at the stake for the savage beasts that are to rend you. A shudder comes over you, for the place has magnetized you with its old life. You look hurriedly round to seek flight, when you suddenly hear a soprano voice saying, “François, where did the Vestal Virgins sit?” and you wake from your dream.

Later still the moon shines through the arches and softens and hallows the ruins of the old amphitheatre ; an owl plaintively hoots from the upper cornice, and from the grove near by you hear the nightingale’s heart throbbing into song ; voices are talking under the galleries, and far up a torch wanders and glimmers along the wall, where some enterprising English party is exploring the ruins. The sentinel paces to and fro in the shadowy entrance, and parties of strangers come in to see the “Colosseum by moonlight.” They march backward and forward, and their “guide, philosopher, and friend,” the courier, in broken English answers their questions. They are very much interested to know how long, and how broad, and how

high the amphitheatre is, and how many persons it would hold, and where the beasts were kept, and, above all, where the Vestal Virgins sat; and every Englishman quotes the passage from "Manfred," in which Lord Byron describes the Colosseum, and listens with special attention for the owls and the watch-dog, and is rather inclined to think he has been cheated unless he does happen to hear them; and every truly sentimental young lady agrees with the poet, when he says that the moonlight makes

"The place
Become religion, and the heart run o'er
With silent worship of the great of old,"

who played such pretty pranks here some eighteen hundred years ago.

Such is the Colosseum at the present day. Let us go back into the past, and endeavour to reconstruct it.

We are in the beginning of the reign of the great Julius, and the stormy populace of Rome has no amphitheatre for its gladiatorial games and combats with wild beasts. When they take place, they are exhibited in the Forum, and there the people throng and crowd the temporary seats by which a small arena is enclosed. But this is soon felt to be insufficient and inconvenient, and Julius for the first time now erects in the Campus Martius a great wooden structure, to which is given the name of *amphitheatrum*. Before this we have only had theatres, which were invariably semi-circular in form, the seats of the spectators fronting the stage, which occupied the line of the diameter. We have now, for the first time, an amphitheatre in the form of an ellipse, in which the arena is entirely enclosed with tiers of seats, and this is the shape which henceforward all amphitheatres are destined to take.

This wooden amphitheatre, however, in the reign of Augustus gives way to an amphitheatre of stone, which, at

the instance of the emperor, is built in the Campus Martius by Statilius Taurus. But it was too small to satisfy the wishes of the people, and Augustus seems to have entertained at one time a prospect of building one still larger on the very spot now occupied by the Colosseum ; but among his various schemes of embellishing the city, this was abandoned. Tiberius seems to have done nothing in this respect. Caligula, however, began to build a large stone amphitheatre, but he died before it had made much progress, and it was not continued by his successor. Still later, Nero built a temporary amphitheatre of wood in the Campus Martius, where were represented those remarkable games at which he was not only a spectator but an actor. Here at times he might be seen lounging on the *suggestus* in imperial robes of delicate purple, that flowed loosely and luxuriously about him, his head crowned with a garland of flowers, and looking so like a woman in his dress, that you might easily be deceived as to his sex, were it not for that cruel face, with its hawk nose and small fierce eyes, that looks out under the flowers. Here, at other times, half naked, and armed like a gladiator, he fights in the arena, and woe be to him who dares to draw the imperial blood ! If we could look in at one of the games given in this amphitheatre, we should see not only the emperor playing the gladiator's part on the arena, but at his side, and fighting against each other, at times no less than four hundred senators and six hundred Roman knights. Here, too, this mad artist played his violin, made recitations for the poets, and acted, mixing with the populace, and winning their golden opinions. Scorned and hated by the upper classes, he was certainly loved by many in the lower ranks, and for many a year upon his tomb was daily found the offering of fresh flowers.

Meanwhile, Nero has built his golden house on the Palatine Hill, with its gorgeous halls, theatres, and corridors,

thronged with marble statues ; and at its base is an artificial lake, fed by pure waters brought from the mountains, in which at times he celebrates his *naumachiæ*. This occupies the very spot on which the Colosseum is afterwards to be built, but it is only a lake during the reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius. When Nero set the torch to Rome, among the many buildings which were consumed was the old amphitheatre of Statilius Taurus, and Rome had only that of the Campus Martius, in which the brutal and gluttonous Vitellius could carry on those gladiatorial games which were necessary for the popularity of the emperor and the peace of the people.

But when Titus and Vespasian return after the conquest of Jerusalem, enriched with spoils, a great change takes place. The population cries out for "*Panem et Circenses*," and there is no amphitheatre in which they can fitly be given. Then it is that the Lake of Nero is drained, and out of the Jewish captives who have been brought to Rome to grace the imperial triumph, twelve thousand of those unhappy slaves, whose descendants still burrow in the Ghetto, might be seen, in the year 72 A.D., under the smack of the whip, laying the first stones of the Amphitheatrum Flavium, which now goes by the name of the Colosseum. For long years these poor wretches toiled at their work ; but when they had reached the third tier of seats Vespasian died. Titus then continued the construction, and dedicated the amphitheatre, in the year 80 A.D., but it was not completely finished until the reign of Domitian. At the dedication by Titus there was a magnificent spectacle. The games lasted for one hundred days. Fifty wild beasts were killed every day, and no less than 5000 were slaughtered in the arena. According to the tradition of the Church, the design of the amphitheatre was made by Gaudentius, a Christian architect, who afterwards suffered martyrdom within its walls.

The building is at last finished, and a magnificent structure it must have been. Looking at it from the outside, we behold a grand elevation of four stories, built of enormous blocks of travertine, that glow like rough gold in the sunlight. The lower story is Doric, the second Ionic, the third Corinthian, and the fourth Composite; the lower three being composed of arches with engaged columns, and the upper being a solid wall pierced with square openings and faced by pilasters. High up against the blue sky is drawn the curved cornice of its summit, with huge projecting brackets, on which the poles supporting the *velarium*, or awning, are fixed. The two middle rows of arches are thronged with marble statues, and over the principal entrance is a great triumphal car drawn by horses. Just before it is the "*meta sudans*," over whose simple cone, fixed upon a square base, the water oozes through a thousand perforated holes, and streams into the basin below.* Above, on the Palatine, are the splendid porticoes and pillars of the golden house, with its green hanging gardens, and beyond, on the Via Sacra, is the grand triumphal arch of Titus, and afterwards of Trajan. .

It is a holiday, and games are to be given in the amphitheatre. The world of Rome is flocking to it from all quarters. Senators and knights with their body-guards of slaves and gladiators, soldiers glittering with silver and gold, youths with their pedagogues, women, artisans, and priests, companies of gladiators, marshalled by *Lanistæ*, cohorts with flashing bucklers and swords, and masses of freedmen, slaves, and the common populace of the city, are pouring down the Via Sacra, and filling the air with a confused noise and uproar, in which shouts of laughter and cheering are mingled with the screams of women and the clash of swords. At times the clear piercing shriek of a trumpet or the brazen clash of music rises above this simmering caldron of

* It is thus represented in two medals struck by Titus and Domitian.

noise ; and here and there, looking up the human river that pours down the slope of the Via Sacra, you see gray sheaves of bristling spears lifted high above the crowd, or here and there a golden eagle that gleams and wavers in the sun, where some Roman legion sharply marches through the loitering mass of people. We push along with the crowd, and soon we arrive at the amphitheatre, where we pause and struggle vainly to read the *libellum* or programme, which the “*editor*” or exhibitor has affixed to the walls, to inform the public of the names of the gladiators, and the different games and combats of the day. The majestic porticoes which surround the whole building are filled with swarms of people, some lingering and lounging there till the time shall come for the games to begin, or looking at the exquisite designs in stucco with which they are adorned,* and some crowding up the “*vomitoria*,” which at regular distances led up to the seats. Here we procure our tickets for a numbered seat, and soon push up the steps and come into the interior circle of the mighty amphitheatre, glad enough at last to be jostled no longer and to get our seat. Already the lofty ranges of benches are beginning to be filled, and at a rough guess there must be even now some 50,000 persons there. But many a range is still empty, and we know that 87,000 persons can be seated, while there is standing room for 22,000 more. The huge *velarium* is bellying, sagging, and swaying above our heads, veined with cords, and throwing a transparent shadow over the whole building ; but how it is supported, who can tell ? but we may congratulate ourselves that we are on the shady side, where the sun does not beat ;

* These still remained in the fifteenth century, and were copied and engraved by Giovanni da Udine, in the time of Leo X. This painter, who was the first to revive the use of stucco, after the manner of the ancient Romans, in decoration and arabesque, was employed by Raffaele to make the stucco of the Logge, in the Vatican, the designs of which were taken, in a great measure, from those which were found in the Baths of Titus and in the Colosseum.

for the mad emperor, when the games have not been fierce and bloody enough to please him, has many a time ordered a portion of the *velarium* to be removed, so as to let the burning sun in upon those who were unlucky enough to be opposite to it, and then prohibited any one from leaving his place under penalty of instant death.

Looking down, we see surrounding the arena a wall about 15 feet in height, faced with rich marbles, and intended to guard the audience against the wild beasts. This is sometimes called the *podium*, though the term is more appropriately applied to the terrace on the top of the wall, which extends in front of the benches, and is railed round by a trelliswork of metal. There is the seat of honour, and there are three or four ranges of chairs set apart for persons who are entitled to the honours of the *curule* chair. Those who are taking their seats in them now are, or have been, some of them, prætors, and some consuls, curules, ædiles, or censors. There, too, is the Flamen Dialis : opposite to the prætors, that group of white-robed women, also in the *podium*, is the Vestal Virgins ; and there, on the raised tribune, is the seat of the *editor* who exhibits the games.

Above the *podium* are three tiers, called the *mæniana*, which are separated from each other by long platforms running round the whole building, and called *præcinctiones*. The first of these, consisting of fourteen rows of stone and marble seats, is for the senators and equestrian orders, and they have the luxury of a cushion to sit upon. The second tier is for the *populus*, and the third, where there are only wooden benches, is occupied by the "*pullati*," or common people of the lower classes. Above these is a colonnade or long gallery, set apart for women, who are admitted when there is to be no naked fighting among the gladiators. But as yet the seats are empty, for the women are not admitted before the fifth hour. On the middle seats where the plebeians sit there is not a single person in black, for this

was prohibited by Octavius Cæsar, and it was he also who ordered that the ambassadors should not stand, as they used to do, in the orchestra or *podium*, and that the young nobles should always be accompanied by their pedagogues.

While we are looking round we can hear the roar of the wild beasts, which are kept in great caves under the pavement of the arena ; and sometimes we see their wild glaring faces through the arched doors with which the walls of the *podium* were pierced ; and they are now protected by portcullises, which latter will be drawn up by cords to let the wild beasts into the arena, and these, which may be seen raging and roaring behind them now, will have to fight for their lives to-day.

The arena is strewn with yellow sand and sawdust, so that the gladiators may have a firm footing ; but underneath this is a solid pavement of stones closely cemented so as to hold water ; and when the *naumachie* or naval battles are given, there are pipes to flood it, so as to form an artificial lake on which galleys may float. There, too, near the northern entrance, you will see a flight of broad stairs, through which great machines are sometimes introduced into the arena.

There is now a sudden stir among the people, and the amphitheatre resounds with the cry of "*Ave, Imperator!*" as the emperor, in his purple robes, surrounded by his lictors and imperial guard, enters and takes his seat on the elevated chair called the *suggestus* or *cubiculum*, opposite to the main entrance. Then sound the trumpets, and the gladiators who are to fight to-day enter the arena in a long procession, and make the tour of the whole amphitheatre. They are then matched in pairs, and their swords are examined by the *editor*, and even by the emperor, to see if they are sharp and in good condition. After this comes a *prælusio*, or sham battle, with modern swords and spears. There is the *Retiarius* clothed in a short tunic, his head, breast, and legs

uncovered, and a net upon his arm, with which he will strive to entangle his adversary ere he despatches him with that sharp trident at his side. Near him is his usual adversary the *Myrmillo*, armed with his oblong curving shield and long dagger, and wearing on his head the helmet with the sign of the fish (*μορμυρος*) from which he derives his name. There, too, is the *Laqueator* with his noose, the *Andabata* with his close helmet, through which there are no eye-holes, and who will fight blindfold; and all the other gladiators, with the *Lanistæ* who accompany them to see that all is fair, and to excite their spirit in the combat. They are now matched and ready. The *prælusio* is over; the trumpet again sounds, and the first on the list advance to salute the emperor before engaging in their desperate contest.

The famous picture of Gerome the French artist gives one a vivid notion of what the spectacle in the Colosseum was at this moment. The fat, brutal, overfed figure of Vitellius is seen above in the Imperial chair, and in the arena below a little group of gladiators is pausing before him to salute him with their accustomed speech, "*Ave, Imperator! morituri te salutant!*" The benches are crowded row above row with spectators, eager for the struggle that is to take place between the new combatants. They have already forgotten the last, and heed not the dead bodies of man and beast that slaves are now dragging out of the arena with grappling-irons. A soft light filtering through the huge tent-like *velarium* overhead illumines the vast circle of the amphitheatre. Thousands of eager eyes are fixed on the little band, who now only wait the imperial nod to join battle, and a murmurous war of impatience and delight seems to be sounding like the sea over the vast assembly. Looking at this picture, one can easily imagine the terrible excitement of a gladiatorial show, when 100,000 hearts were beating with the combatants, and screams of rage or triumph saluted the blows that drank blood, or yelled his fate to the

wretched victim as he sank in the arena and the benches swam before him: or take, to aid the imagination, the graphic and vigorous description of this scene given by Amphilocheus, in an epistle in verse, to Seleucus, and thus admirably translated by Mrs. Browning:—

“They sit, unknowing of these agonies,
Spectators at a show. When a man flies
From a beast’s jaw, they groan, as if at least
They missed the ravenous pleasure, like the beast,
And sat there vainly. When in the next spring
The victim is attained, and, uttering
The deep roar or quick shriek between the fangs,
Beats on the dust the passion of his pangs,—
All pity dieth in that glaring look.
They clap to see the blood run like a brook ;
They stare with hungry eyes, which tears should fill,
And cheer the beasts on with their soul’s goodwill ;
And wish more victims to their maw, and urge
And lash their fury, as they shared the surge,
Gnashing their teeth, like beasts, on flesh of men.”

The accounts of the *venationes* or battles with wild beasts, and the gladiatorial shows, exhibited in the Colosseum and elsewhere by the ancient Romans, are so amazing as to be scarcely credible. The people seem to have been insatiable in their thirst for these bloody games. They were introduced originally by Lucius Metellus, in the year 251 B.C., when he brought into the circus 142 elephants taken by him in his victory over the Carthaginians. This, however, was scarcely a *venatio* in the sense of later days, for the elephants were killed, as it would seem, only to get rid of them. In the year 186 B.C., however, a real *venatio* was introduced by M. Fabius, when lions and panthers were exhibited. The taste once formed grew apace, and at a *venatio* given by Pompey, in the year 55 B.C., upon the dedication of the temple of Venus Victrix, an immense number of animals were slaughtered, among which were six hundred lions and eighteen or

twenty elephants. Gætulians fought with the latter, and drove them to such fury with their javelins, that the enraged beasts strove to break down the railings of the area and revenge themselves on the audience. Julius Cæsar also distinguished himself by his magnificent *venationes*, one of which lasted five days, in the course of which he introduced giraffes, then for the first time seen in Europe. Titus, as we have seen, on the dedication of the Colosseum, exhibited for slaughter no less than the almost incredible number of 5000 beasts;* and in the latter days of Probus there is an account of one of these spectacles, where 1000 ostriches, 1000 stags, 1000 boars, besides great numbers of wild goats, wild sheep, and other animals were destroyed in the circus, for the satisfaction of the Roman people.† So excited and fascinated did the audience sometimes become, that they were allowed to rush into the arena among the animals and slay as they chose. On some occasions the arena was planted with large trees so thickly as to resemble a forest, and among them the animals were turned loose, to be hunted down by the people. At another show, Probus exhibited 700 wild beasts and 600 gladiators. These numbers seem monstrous, and almost lead one to suppose that these beasts could not have been all introduced at once; yet Suetonius directly tells us that Titus exhibited 5000 beasts “*uno die*,” on one day. Indeed it has been calculated that no less than 10,779 wild beasts might stand together in the arena.‡

The slaughter of animals was not so terrible as that which took place at the gladiatorial shows, where human life was brutally wasted for the amusement of the people. These games are said to have originated in an ancient Etruscan

* Suetonius, Life of Titus.

† These are the numbers stated by Vopiscus, in the Life of Probus, p. 233. Hist. Aug. edit. 1519.

‡ T. P. Nolli, et Marangoni delle Memorie Sac. et Prof. del Amphit. Flav., pp. 33, 34.

custom of slaying captives and slaves on the funeral pyres of the dead. They were first introduced into Rome by Marcus and Decimus Brutus, at the funeral of their father, in the year 264 B.C.; and on the death of P. Lucinius Crassus, Pontifex Maximus, one hundred and twenty gladiators fought for three days, and raw meat was distributed among the people. These games at first were restricted to funerals, but they soon began to be exhibited in the amphitheatre; and under the empire the taste for them had grown to such madness that no family of wealth was without its gladiators, and no festival took place without deadly contests between them. Even while the Romans were at their banquets, gladiators were introduced to fight with each other, the guests looking on and applauding, as they sipped their wine, the skilful blows that were followed by blood. Blood was the only stimulant that roused the jaded appetites of a Roman, and gave a zest to his pleasures. In the amphitheatres the numbers that fought together almost surpass belief. At the triumph of Trajan over the Dacians more than ten thousand were exhibited; and to such an enormous number had the gladiators increased under the Cæsars, that sixty thousand of them are said to have fallen under Spartacus. At last the rage for these games became so great, that not only freemen, but dwarfs, knights, senators, the emperor himself, and even women fought as gladiators, and esteemed it no dishonour.* And such was the terrible loss of life in the arena that Justus Lipsius affirms that no war was ever so destructive of the human race. “*Credo, immo scio, nullum bellum tantam cladem vastitiam que generi humano intulisse quam hos ad voluptatem ludos.*”†

* Suetonius, in his Life of Domitian, says, “Venationes gladiatorum et noctibus ad Lychnuchos dedit; nec virorum modo pugnas, sed et foeminarum;” and Tacitus, in his 12th Book, says, “Foeminarum senatorumque illustrium plures per arenam foedati sunt.”

† Just. Lips. Saturn. Sermon. lib. ii. cap. 3. Any one who is

At times the arena of the Colosseum was flooded with water deep enough to float vessels, and engagements took place, where two miniature fleets, laden with gladiators, fought together to represent a naval battle. These *naumachix* were attended with an enormous loss of life, and were exhibited on a scale of great grandeur and magnificence. In one of the sea-fights exhibited by Nero, sea monsters were to be seen swimming round the artificial lake ; in another, by Titus, some 3000 men fought ; and in another, exhibited by Domitian, the ships engaged were almost equal in number to two real fleets. One of the most famous of these *naumachix* took place in the reign of Claudius, on the occasion of the draining of Lake Fucinus. In this spectacle the contest was between vessels representing the Rhodian and Sicilian fleets, each consisting of twelve *triremes*, and having, as Tacitus tells us, 10,000 combatants. These were for the greater part compulsory gladiators (*sontes*), composed of slaves and captives of war. As they passed the spot where the emperor sat, before engaging, they hailed him with the cry of “ *Ave, Imperator! morituri te salutant!* ”—“ Hail, Cæsar! those who are to die salute thee!” To which he responded, “ *Avete vos,* ”—“ Health to you; ”— a phrase which they interpreted as an absolution by the emperor from the necessity of exposing their lives for his amusement, and refused to engage. When a message to this effect was brought to Claudius, he sat, for a time, as Suetonius tells us, in deep meditation, pondering whether he should destroy them all by setting fire to the vessels and burning them alive, or should allow them to kill each other by the sword. At last he decided upon the latter course, and, descending from his seat, he ran, with a vacillating, græceless gait (*non sine fæda vacillatione discurrens*), around

desirous to know more of the gladiators will find an interesting account of them in this curious and learned essay.

the borders of the lake, and partly by persuasion, and partly by threats, persuaded them to fight.

A circle of beams was built around a vast inclosure, so as to prevent any of these wretched victims from flight, and not only all the ground was guarded by large numbers of horse and infantry, but on the lake itself were covered vessels laden with armed soldiers to keep order. The spectacle must have been magnificent. The banks of the lake, the hill-sides and mountain-tops were thronged by an enormous crowd, which had flocked to see the battle, from Rome and from all the adjacent country. The emperor, robed in imperial purple, presided over the games, and at his side sat Agrippina, in a golden mantle. In the midst of the lake rose from the water, by machinery, a silver triton, who blew a trumpet to sound the attack. The combatants fought with great bravery, and it was not until a large number had been slain that the signal for separation was given.

Constantine, and his son Constans, first issued edicts prohibiting these gladiatorial shows; but the appetite for them had become too craving to be denied gratification, and, notwithstanding these prohibitions, they continued to flourish, and survived the ancient religion more than seventy years. St. Augustine relates in his "Confessions,"* that about the year 390 a certain Alipius, one of his fellow-students, who had been baptized into the Christian religion at Milan, came to Rome. Here he was strongly urged by his friends to go and see the gladiatorial shows in the Colosseum. At first he refused, but finally yielded to their persuasions and agreed to accompany them, resolving internally, at the same time, to keep his eyes shut, so as not to see the atrocities which he knew were committed there. This resolution he kept for some time; but at last, startled by a great shout of the people on the occasion of some remarkable

* Ch. viii. lib. 6.

feat of skill, poor Alipius, overcome by curiosity, opened his eyes. It was then all over with him; he could not shut them again; but from moment to moment his excitement grew fiercer and fiercer, until at last his voice was heard shouting madly with the rest. From that time forward these games became a sort of insanity in him, and he not only returned to them constantly, but exhorted everybody he knew to accompany him. "*Clamavit, exarsit, abstulit secum insaniam qua stimularetur redire et alios trahens.*" This story, related by St. Augustine, clearly shows that the gladiatorial games continued in his time; and the verses of Prudentius, written against Symmachus, the prefect of Rome, also prove that they existed in the time of the emperors Valentinianus, Theodosius, and Arcadius.

On the Kalends of January, in the year 404, a remarkable incident occurred in the Colosseum on the occasion of a gladiatorial show, which is recorded by Theodoret and Cassiodorus.* While, in the presence of an immense crowd of spectators, the gladiators were fighting in the arena, a monkish figure, clothed in the dress of his order, was suddenly seen to rush into the midst of the combatants, and with loud prayer and excited gesture endeavour to separate them. This was an Eastern monk, named Telemachus or Almachius (for such is the chance of fame, that his name is not accurately recorded), who had travelled from the East with the express design of bearing his testimony against these unchristian games, and sacrificing his life, if necessary, to obtain their abolition. The Prætor Alybius, however, who was passionately attached to them, indignant at the interruption, and excited by the wild cries of the audience, instantly ordered the gladiators to cut the intruder down,

* Theod. Hist. Eccles., cap. xxiv. lib. 5. Cassiod. lx. c. 11. See also Justus Lipsius, Saturn. Serm., lib. ii. cap. 111. Baronius ad Ann., et in Notis ad Martyrol. Rom., 1 Jan. Augustin. Confess., lib. vi. cap. 8; lib. i. cap. 12.

and Telemachus paid the forfeit of his life for his heroic courage. But the crown and the palm of martyrdom were given him, and he was not only raised to a place in the calendar among the saints, but accomplished in measure the great object for which he had sacrificed himself; for, struck with the grandeur and justness of the courageous protest which he had sealed with his blood, the Emperor Honorius abolished the gladiatorial games, and from that time forward no gladiator has fought in the Colosseum against another gladiator.

Combats with wild beasts still however continued, as is plain from rescripts of Honorius and Theodosius, ordaining that no one not specially appointed by the imperial ministers should have the right to hunt wild beasts to secure them for the public games, but should only be allowed to kill them in self-defence or in defence of the country. These *venationes* in the Colosseum continued down to the death of Theodoric in 526, when they fell into disuse, and the edict of Justinian absolutely abolished them.

Up to this period there is every reason to suppose that the Colosseum was in perfect preservation. Cassiodorus, who describes the games held there in the time of Theodoric, makes no mention of any injury, as he certainly would have done had there been any of importance.* Heretofore it had been kept in repair to serve for the exhibition of gladiatorial shows, but the edict of Justinian, prohibiting all games therein, rendered it useless as an amphitheatre and sealed its fate. Thenceforward it was abandoned to the assaults of time and weather, and to the caprice of man, and their injuries were never repaired. The earthquakes and floods of the seventh century undoubtedly shook it and destroyed it partially. Barbarians at home and from abroad

* Cassiod., lib. v. Var. Ep. 24. See also Pietro Angelo Barges, in his learned *Epistola de Privatorum Ædific. Urbis. Eversoribus*. Grævius *Antiq. Rom.*, tom. 4.

preyed upon it, boring it for its metal clamps, plundering it of every article of value, defacing its architecture, and despoiling it of its ornaments of silver and gold as well as of its poorer metals. In almost every one of its blocks of travertine is now to be seen a rudely excavated hole, by which the ingenuity of antiquarians has been greatly exercised ; but it now seems to be agreed on all sides that these holes were made for the purpose of extracting the iron bolts with which the stones were originally clamped together. Still, it would seem to have been entire, or nearly so, as late as the beginning of the eighth century, when the Anglo-Saxons visited Rome, and, gazing at it with feelings of awe and admiration, broke forth into the enthusiastic speech recorded by the venerable Bede : “ *Quamdiu stabit Colysæus, stabit et Roma. Quando cadet Colysæus, cadet et Roma. Quando cadet Roma, cadet et mundus.*” Thus Englished by Byron :—

“ While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand !
 When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall !
 And when Rome falls—the world !”

From this time forward, exposed to tumult, battle, and changes of ownership, now occupied as a fortress by the Frangipani, now by the Annibaldi, and wrested from both in turn by pope and emperor, it fell rapidly into ruin, and its walls began to crumble and fall into decay. As early as the year 1362, the Bishop of Orvieto, legate to Pope Urban V., wrote to inform the Pontiff that the stones of the Colosseum had been offered for sale, but no one had proposed to purchase them save the Frangipani family, who wanted them to build a palace. The government at this period, not placing any value on the Colosseum as a memorial of antiquity, but regarding it merely as a quarry of stone, were in the habit of granting permissions to excavate travertine therefrom to any princely family who could afford to pay for them. Donatus tells us that Paul II. (1464 to 1471) used

the blocks of travertine taken from the ruins of the Colosseum to build his palace of San Marco; and a monstrous hole was made in it when the great Farnese palace was built out of its spoils.*

Nor was this the worst treatment which this noble structure was to suffer. Not only were blocks of travertine removed, but all the marble was torn down and burnt into lime;† and to such an extent were the spoliations of this period carried on, as to render it only surprising that anything now remains. This was not the only building thus barbarously served. Poggius relates that, when he first went to Rome, the Temple of Concord was perfect—“*opere marmoreo admodum specioso*,”—but that soon after, the whole building, with its splendid marble portico, was pulled down and burnt for lime. The marble of the tomb of Cecilia Metella met the same sad fate; and Eneas Sylvius, who afterwards became Pope under the title of Pius II., in an epigram written by him, and preserved by Mabillon, expresses a fear that these barbarous practices will finally lead to the destruction of all the ancient monuments.‡

Sadly enough, the mausoleum of the great Carian king, Mausolus, one of the wonders of the ancient world, suffered the same fate. Not only the marble of the architecture, the massive stairs, the splendid columns, but the masterpieces

* “Per fabbricare il Palazzo Farnese gran guasto diede al Anfiteatro di Tito,” says Muratori, in his *Annals* ad An. 1549, tom. x. p. 335. See also *Mémoires de l’Acad. des Inscip.*, tom xxviii. p. 585.

† “Ob stultitiam Romanorum majori ex parte ad calcem redactam,” says Poggius, in his *Essay De Variet. Fortun.*

‡ “Oblectat me Roma tuas spectare ruinas
Ex cujus lapsa gloria prisca patet—
Sed tuus hic populus muris defossa vetustis
Calceo in obsequium marmora dura coquit.
Impia tercentum si sic gens egerit annos
Nullum hic indicium nobilitatis erit.”

of Greek sculpture, wrought by Scopas and his scholars, were broken to pieces and burnt into lime by the knights of St. John, to build the castle of Budrum.*

Marangoni tells us that there was a sale of the stones of the Colosseum in 1531, and a century afterwards some of them were used in the building of the Campidoglio. Even at the very period of the revival of the arts it would thus seem that no regard was paid to the preservation of the ancient temples. Michael Angelo himself built the Farnese Palace and the Campidoglio, and even he seems not to have protested against this barbarity. Urban VIII. also built, out of the quarry of the Colosseum, the façade of the Barberini Palace, tore the brass plates from the Pantheon to build the hideous *baldacchino* of St. Peter's, and threatened to serve the remains of the tomb of Cecilia Metella in like manner. But the sins of Urban VIII. were small in comparison to those of the Farnese Pope. He spared nothing, levying his exactions not only upon the Colosseum, but also on the arch of Titus, the baths of Constantine and Caracalla, the forum of Trajan, the temple of Antonine and Faustina, the theatre of Marcellus, and other buildings, stripping them ruthlessly of their precious marbles and splendid columns. The accounts of the apostolic chamber show a sum of no less than 7,317,888 *scudi* expended between 1541 and 1549 on the Palazzo del Campo dei Fiori. Truly, as Gibbon says, "every traveller who views the Farnese Palace may curse the sacrilege and luxury of these upstart princes."

To check these abuses, Eugenius IV. is said to have surrounded the Colosseum with a wall, and, by a charter

* That the last fragments of these noble works have been saved is due to the energy and spirit of Mr. Charles T. Newton, who has thus rendered a valuable service, not only to his own country, but to the universal republic of art. Mr. Newton has recently published a history of his discoveries at Halicarnassus, Cnidus, and Branchidæ, with extensive illustrations, which is most interesting and instructive.

long extant, to have granted the grounds and edifice to the monks of a neighbouring convent. But if this wall ever existed, which seems rather doubtful, it was overthrown after his death in a tumult of the populace; and no traces of it now remain.*

In 1585, Sextus V. endeavoured at once to check this barbarism of destruction and to utilize the Colosseum by establishing in it a woollen manufactory. For many years it had served as the arena for all sorts of fairs, and possibly this fact suggested the notion of making it subservient to some practical use. But after spending on the project no less than 15,000 *scudi*, he abandoned it as impracticable. Let us not grieve; for from all that can be collected of the plan from the designs of the architect, Fontana, it was the Pope's intention to wall up the arches and arcades, which would simply have ruined the building. A century later, Clement XI. revived the project, and went so far as to inclose the lower arcades and establish a manufactory of saltpetre. But this scheme also fell through.

But better days were now coming. In the year of the Jubilee, 1675, Clement X. set apart the whole building to the worship of the martyrs; and on the 11th of February, 1742, Benedict XIV. again consecrated the Colosseum to the memory of the Christian martyrs who had suffered there, and made it a church in 1744. He then erected the cross in the centre of the arena, repaired the altars established by Clement XI., and cleared the place of the robbers and prostitutes by which it had previously been haunted. This act was the salvation of the Colosseum. Taken into the fold of the church, it was now cared for, and from this time

* Gibbon, who makes this statement, founds it upon Montfaucon, who received it from Flaminius Vacca, who lived a century after Eugenius, and reported the fact on the testimony of the Olivetan monks of Sta. Maria Nuova. But Marangoni states that, on examining their archives, he found in them no record of such a fact.

forward every pains was used to preserve it, and the injuries of time have been constantly repaired. Parts of it, however, were in a very dangerous condition, and in the year 1813 one of the arches fell to the ground. To prevent the tottering fragments around it from falling, the wall supporting the north-west angle was built by Pius VII., and his successors have faithfully lent their aid to the preservation of the building. It is said that the trembling stones were so threatening that convicts under sentence of death and imprisonment for life were employed to build up this wall, with the promise of pardon if they succeeded ; but whether this statement be actually true I cannot affirm.

Pius IX. has also made very material restorations, and perhaps in some cases carried them too far ; thus detracting from the antique character of the ruins. He has constructed a gigantic buttress at the southern end, to support the lofty wall, which threatened to fall ; and some of the arches and interior walls he has entirely rebuilt.

Since the French have taken possession of Rome they have placed a nightly guard at the Colosseum, with the object of keeping it clear of robbers and thieves, who are said to infest it, and no one now is allowed to pass without a special permission. To insure safety in the Colosseum by a police is so far praiseworthy, but strictly to require of all strangers, and under all circumstances, a special permit, is annoying and unnecessary. Tempted by the beauty of the full moon, if you stroll down to the Colosseum forgetful of this regulation, and thinking to pass a pleasant half-hour in its arena, you are suddenly stopped at the entrance by the French sentinel, and all your romantic hopes dashed by three interrogative words : “ *Votre permis, Monsieur ?* ” Vainly you protest that you are strangers and not robbers, that your objects are most peaceful, and that such rules cannot apply to you. You have only the short, irritating rejoinder, “ *On ne peut pas passer, sans un permis,* ”—and

to this the sentinel will stick with sullen obstinacy. No offers of money or cigars, no bland words, no expressions of disappointment, no reasonings avail to move him. He gives you no sympathy, shortly prohibits your coming in, and leaves you to console yourself as you can, while he marches up and down under the dark arches. Of course you go away irritated and vexed, and in a mood crossly to criticise the French and their occupation of Rome. You become very unreasonable, and do not perceive, that without this occupation, the "legitimate influence of France," whatever that may happen to be, could not be sustained in the eternal city—that it is better to have an annoying police than to run the risk of being assaulted or robbed in the Colosseum—that among so bloodthirsty and violent a people as the Romans, it would be impossible for you to be safe in the hands only of a Roman police—that the Romans are very unreasonable in their dislike of the French, who have done so much for their civilization; have introduced plate-glass in some of the shops in the Corso; imported their hats, bonnets, and crinolines to take the place of the foolish costumes which used to be seen in the streets; opened a number of little wine-shops and new cafés; amused the promenaders in the Pincio by their bands; enlivened the streets by their soldiers; played unceasingly that charming instrument, the drum, along the Via Sacra and round the Palace of the Cæsars; and more than this, kept the city safe with their nightly patrol of soldiers. If they have not fulfilled the pledges of their famous letter to Edgar Ney, their commandant has given constant receptions and balls, where one would have the privilege of meeting French officers whom one might not otherwise have seen in society. On the other hand, if the French have not learned to speak Italian at all, the Romans have, at least, learned to speak very bad French. And I cannot agree with the French officer who said of them, "*Comme ils sont bêtes, ces Italiens, il*

y a dix ans que nous sommes ici, et ils ne savent pas encore parler le Français."

After the edict of Justinian, prohibiting the celebration of any games, either by gladiators or of wild beasts, these exhibitions fell into discredit, and for a long period the Colosseum was entirely abandoned. But, from time to time, in succeeding centuries, efforts were made to revive the exhibitions of wild beasts in the arena, and bull-fights were not unfrequent. The last of these seems to have taken place in the year 1332, and Ludovico di Bonconte Monaldeschi has quaintly described it in his annals of the period, printed in the appendix to the great work of Muratori.* Though his narrative is probably taken from the account of others rather than from his own memory, he having been only five years of age when the exhibition took place, yet it bears the stamp of truth deeply impressed on it in every part.

"This festival took place," he says, "on the third of November. All the matrons of Rome were present, standing in the balconies, which were lined with scarlet. There was the beautiful Savella Orsini and two others of her family; and there were the Donne Colonnese, though La Giovine could not be present because she had broken her foot in the garden of the tower of Nero; and there was also there the beautiful Jacova di Vico, or Rovere; and these ladies led all the beautiful women of Rome. The Rovere leading the Trasteverine women, the Orsini those of Piazza Navona and San Pietro, and the Colonnese all the rest. All the noble ladies were in one circle, and all the ladies of lower rank in another, and the combatants in a third; and the huntings were by lot, drawn by old Pietro Jacovo Rossi, from St. Angelo in Pescheria. The first *cacciatore* was a foreigner from Rimini, named Galeotto

* Muratori, Script. Rerum. Ital., tom. xii. pp. 535, 536.

Malatesta, who was dressed in green, with a rapier in his hand, and on his iron helmet was inscribed this motto, '*Solo io come Oratio*' (I alone like Horatius); and he rushed forward to meet the bull, and wounded him in the left eye, so that the bull took to flight. He then gave the beast a blow behind, and received therefor a kick on his knee, which knocked him over, but the bull continued to flee and did not attack him. Then, greatly excited (*tutto infierito*), Cicco della Valle rushed forth, dressed in half black and half white, and the motto he carried on his helmet was '*Io son Enea per Lavinia*' (I am Æneas for Lavinia); and this he did because the daughter of Messer Jovenale, of whom he was desperately enamoured, was named Lavinia. While he was fighting valiantly with the bull another was let in, who was attacked by Mezzo Stallo, a stout youth dressed as a negro; his wife being dead, he bore the motto '*Cosi sconcolato vivo*' (Thus, disconsolate I live), and he bore himself bravely against the bull." A crowd of other nobles also were there with various emblems and escutcheons, a number of which are given by this old author,—“besides many,” he continues, “whom I should weary to enumerate. Each assaulted his bull, and eighteen of the combatants were killed and nine wounded, while only eleven bulls were killed. Great honours were paid to the bodies of the dead, which were carried to Sta. Maria Maggiore and St. Giovanni in Laterano to be buried. The nephew of Camillo Cencio having been thrown down in the crowd, through the fault of the son of Count Anguillara's sister, Cencio gave him a blow on the head, which instantly killed him, and a great tumult ensued. There was a great crowd at San Giovanni to see the burial of those who were killed at the games.”

During the fifteenth century it was the custom from time to time to represent passion plays or mysteries on a broad

platform over the Colosseum steps, just above the site where, a century later, the chapel was founded. Every Good Friday the death and burial of our Saviour was performed to an audience as large, if we may credit the words of Pancirolus,* as that which formerly attended the antique games. This "mystery" was in *ottava rima*, rudely composed in the commonest dialect of the people, with an *intermezzo* of various little airs which were probably sung. Two examples of these are to be found, says Marangoni, in the library of the Marchese Alessandro Capponi. The "*sacra farsa*"—the Holy Farce of the Resurrection (for so Tirabòschi calls it),† written by Julian Dati, a Florentine, was also performed here. These plays continued until the reign of Paul III., who prohibited them, apparently for no other reason than that they impeded him in robbing the Colosseum of marble and stones for building.

After this, for more than a century, there was no public amusement in the Colosseum, saving for those who employed that time in plundering it. But in 1671 permission was granted by the senate and Cardinal Altieri to represent bull-fights in the arena for six years. This raised a great outcry, and Carlo Tommassi wrote a tract to prove the sanctity of the spot, and to urge the impropriety of reinstating such barbarous usages; which so affected the mind of the pope, Clement X., that he prohibited them, and took measures to prevent them by blocking up the lower arches and consecrating the place. In 1714 Clement XI. established the altars of the Passion, and shortly after were painted the pictures of Jerusalem and the Crucifixion that are now seen over the southern entrance.

I have hitherto not spoken of the martyrs who perished for their faith in the Colosseum. These are generally supposed to have amounted to thousands; but Marangoni,

* Tesori Nascosti. See Marangoni, Mem. Sac. et Prof., p. 59.

† Storia dell. Litt. Ital., vol. vi. p. 3; Lib. iii. p. 814.

who is a careful man and not disposed to exaggerate facts, puts the number of martyrs known, and not merely conjectured, to have suffered in this arena at only twenty-four. Of these, eighteen were men, beginning with St. Ignatius and ending with Telemachus; and six were women. Of the latter, three—St. Martina, St. Italiana, and St. Prisca—were exposed to lions, who, instead of devouring them, licked their feet. And one, St. Daria, wife of St. Crisanto, according to Marangoni, “was under the vaults (*sotte le volte*) of the Amphitheatre, where her chastity was defended by a lion.” *Da un leone fù difesa la sua castita.**

Besides these, there were two hundred and sixty anonymous soldiers under Claudius, who, after digging an arena outside the Porta Salara, were killed, and placed among the records of the Christians as martyrs. Doubtless, however, says Marangoni, there were many others besides those mentioned, whose names we do not know, who were exposed to death under the cruel orders of Diocletian, as is evident from the testimony of Tertullian.†

The manner in which the Christian martyrs were exposed to the wild beasts is shown by some small rilievi in bronze found in the catacombs, where the lions are represented as chained to a pilaster, and the martyrs lie naked and unarmed at their feet. It seems also that the sacrifice of the Christians generally ended the day's sport. When the other shows were over, the condemned Christians were

* *Leones*, as Lord Broughton suggests, may, perhaps, be better read *lenones*; for it is well established that “*sotte le volte*” was a place devoted to brothels, where a woman was more in danger of panders (*lenones*) than of lions (*leones*); and in fact the very word “fornicators” is derived from “*fornices*,” the places under the vaults. Her chastity needed not the defence of any one in the arena, however it might below the vaults; and the old well-known proverb—*Christiani ad leones, virgines ad lenones*—seems to favour this view of martyrdom.

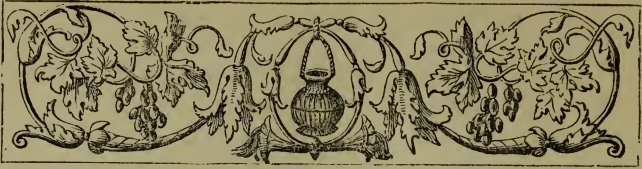
† Cap. 42, Apologia. See also Arringhi Roma Sotter., lib. ii. cap. 1; tom. i. p. 197, edit. 1651.

brought into the arena through files of the hunters of the wild beasts, who beat them with rods as they passed. Some of the women were stripped and exposed in nets, and some were tortured because they would not assume the ceremonial robes worn in the worship of the pagan divinities. Every refinement of cruelty was undoubtedly practised upon a sect who were supposed to worship an ass, and who were thought to plot against the state. While we speak with horror of that ferocious spirit which dragged to torture and death the innocent and virtuous, merely because they differed from the religious dogma of the day, and refused to bow down before the pagan gods, let us also remember that the Catholic Church in later days, when it had attained a power as extensive as that exercised by Imperial Rome, was guilty of fouler wrong and more infamous cruelty, and that the numbers of victims that were sacrificed by the Inquisition in the single reign of Philip II. outnumbered by thousands those who perished under the Roman Emperors. Nor let us plume ourselves too much on our religious tolerance even at the present day. The horrors of the past would not, thank God! be now within the bounds of possibility; but bigotry and persecution have by no means ceased, and infidel and atheist are words which are widely and generally thrown against those who differ in their creed from the established church.

Pius V. used to say that whoever desired to obtain a Christian or Catholic relic, should take some earth from the arena of the Colosseum, where it had been cemented by so much holy blood; and whenever the Cardinal Ulderico Carpegna passed the spot, says Marangoni, this pious gentleman always stopped his carriage, gratefully to commemorate the names of the holy martyrs who had suffered there.

Such are some of the memories which haunt the crumbled

shell of the Colosseum. After all the bloodshed, and murder, and battle, and martyrdom, how peaceful and tranquil it seems! Above us wheel the swallows, that build their "procreant cradles" far up upon the jutting frieze and buttress of the lofty walls, where the air is delicate. There sound the clanging crows, flying blackly along when "night thickens." There flocks of doves build and breed among the ruins and sail out into the blue deeps. All the benches are draped with weeds and grasses, and festooned with creepers and flowers. Many a strange and curious plant may here be seen, peculiar to the place, and these have been recorded in a little volume by Dr. Deakin on the "Flora of the Colosseum." The place remembers not its ancient horrors, as it sleeps in the full sunlight of an Italian day,—but when the shadows of night come on, and the clouds blacken above, and the wind howls through the empty galleries and arches, and the storm comes down over the Colosseum, the clash of the gladiators may still be heard, the roar of the multitudinous voices crying for blood rises on the gale, and those broken benches are thronged with a fearful audience of ghosts.



CHAPTER X.

MIMES, MASKS, AND PUPPETS.

FROM the earliest times the Romans distinguished themselves as *Mimi* and *Pantomimi*. These were divided into two distinct classes; the *Mimi* being farcers who declaimed, while the *Pantomimi*, as we have seen, only gesticulated. Some of these characters still remain in Italy. The *Sanniones* are clearly our modern clowns of the circus, with their somewhat doubtful jokes, their exaggerated grimacing, and the ears on their caps. The *Planipedes* in many respects resemble the pantaloon, and particularly in their long dresses and their shaved heads. The *Ithyphalli* and *Phallophori*, thank heaven! have utterly disappeared. But *Pulcinella* is a direct descendant of the old and famous family of the *Atellaneæ*. If you may trust Capponi, and other learned Italians who have investigated his origin, his pedigree may be clearly traced to these farcers, who were the *Ciarlatani* of Rome in the early days of Tarquin. They were *Oscans*, and came from the town of Atella, now St. Elpidio, only five or six miles from Naples, and the very head-quarters of the real *Pulcinella*. Thus, for more than twenty-four hundred years, he has clung to his native soil and followed in the footsteps of his famous ancestor Maccus. If you disbelieve this pedigree, *Pulcinella* will show you his ancestral statues in bronze dug out of Herculaneum, and his ancestral portraits on the walls of

Pompeii; and Capponi, pointing out to you their beaked or chicken nose,—a family peculiarity which their descendant still retains in his mask,—will explain that the modern name is merely a nickname derived therefrom,—*pullus* being a chicken, and *pullicinus* a little chicken, and *Pullicinellus* or *Pulcinella*, a little chicken-nosed fellow. In like manner, the word *Ciarlatini* may be a mere corruption of *Atellanæ*.

These *Atellanæ Fabulæ*, or *Ludi Osci*, were plays performed by the *Oscans* on planks and trestles, before the invention of the regular theatres; and *Maccus*, then *primo comico*, great ancestor to our *Pulcinella*, from under his mask amused the ancient Romans with his wit and satire. When they spoke they grimaced like modern buffoons, and jested to the delight of Livy and Cicero. Their parts were often woven into dramas, to which they did not properly belong, as Livy tells us; and in this respect, also, they performed precisely the part of *Pulcinella*, who is a constant interloper in plays, in which his character is entirely interpolated. Such was their repute, that even Sylla, the bloody dictator, is said to have written plays for them; and it is quite clear that they were favourites during the days of the Cæsars.

The well-spring of fun in *Pulcinella* is Artesian and inexhaustible. He will never die,—never till fools are no more and we are all wise and wretched. In Rome, as well as in Naples, he is a great favourite; though to be seen to advantage he should be visited in his native country. In his long loose white jacket and pantaloons, his beaked mask covering the upper portion of his whitened face, *Pulcinella* is for ever intriguing, doctoring, bringing lovers together, creating *imbroglios*, and laughing at his victims with the utmost impertinence. He is always married,—his wife and mother-in-law are in a chronic state of quarrel,—and his house is a constant battle-field of humour and absurdity.

In one of the plays of *Pulcinella* he has a struggle with the devil, whom he catches at last by the tail. This he

pulls at fiercely, when, to his great astonishment, it comes off, and the father of evil vanishes, leaving it in his hands. At first he is dumb and confounded with amazement, all of which is expressed by the most extraordinary grimace. Finally, he smells at the end of it, and a grin of satisfaction widens his mouth. Again he smells, indicating by expressive pantomime that the odour is uncommonly good. At last an idea seizes him, he pulls out his knife, and, slicing off a piece as if it were a sausage, puts it into his mouth. Now his delight knows no bounds, but, with absurd expressions of satisfaction, he continues to cut off slice after slice, offering them first to the audience, and then, repenting of his generosity, slipping it into his own mouth, until he has eaten up the whole tail.

Stenterello, the Tuscan type of humour, is also a favourite on the Roman stage; and he, together with *Pulcinella*, hold their high quarters at the Capranica Theatre, alternating with music and juggling, ballet and pantomime, and sometimes with serious opera, tragedy, and high comedy, in delighting the crowd of Romans. *Stenterello* is of the illustrious family of the *queues*. His face is painted in streaks, one front tooth is wanting in his mouth, and he wears the old tricornered hat and tong-tailed coat and breeches. He is an embodiment in caricature of the worst defects of the Tuscan character, and derives his name probably from his excessive parsimony. The lower Florentines live meanly, are given to saving, deny themselves in the quantity and quality of their food, and exist, according to the Tuscan idiom, "*a stento*"—and hence, probably, the name of *Stenterello*. This trait is so well established that the almanacs of Florence, circulated among the common people, contain advice not to be thrifty and saving, but to live more liberally. *Stenterello*, therefore, on the stage, carries this vice to its extreme, and, by his ludicrous efforts at saving, convulses the audience. Another of his characteristics is low cunning. He is always wishing

to marry for the sake of money, but laughs at the notion of love,—is penny wise and pound foolish,—will not spend a paul in hand for the hope of a thousand in the bush, and says to his mistress, “I would not leave you and lose the marriage for—for—for—‘*sette crazie*.’” He stirs the laughter of the people too by his filthy habits; puts his comb and shoe-brush into his pocket with his cheese, and when he hears his bride is coming (for he is always on the point of marriage) he wipes his shoes with his sleeve, and then polishes off his mouth and whiskers with it. Besides this, he is a great coward, and it is a common jest to make a soldier of him. Nothing will rouse his courage but an attempt upon his money. Yet he likes to set other persons by the ears and see them fight, at which he laughs uproariously, but is seized with a ludicrous terror when his own turn comes. He often has a servant, “*Stoppino*,” whom he keeps at the starving point, and whose name signifies a meagre thin taper. In the quality of cowardice he resembles *Pulcinella*; but our Neapolitan friend does not deny his stomach its gratification, for the *Lazzarone* is gourmand while the Florentine is not.

One of the most celebrated of the actors of *Stenterello* is, or rather was, Lorenzo Cannelli; but he is now past the time of acting. When the Austrians took possession of Tuscany he was so bitter in his sarcasms that he often paid for them by *bastonate*. Nothing, however, would rule his tongue. The audience, just before the last act, used to call him out to improvise “*ottave*,” and, after walking up and down the stage for a few minutes, he would pour forth with volubility verses full of spirit and humour.

The old Fiano Theatre, which was to Rome what the San Carlino is to Naples, exists no more, and the once famous *Cassandrino* and *Rugantino* have disappeared with it. *Cassandrino* was to the Romans what *Pulcinella* is to the Neapolitans and *Stenterello* to the Tuscans. He was dressed,

“*alla Spagnuola*,” in black, was pretentious and boastful, thought the women were all in love with him, and was constantly vaunting his great exploits, that had no existence out of his imagination. But it was for his satire that he was particularly noted, for the Roman is by nature a satirist. His constant lampoons against the government and the priests bit so deeply that he was suppressed by Gregory XVI. After Pius IX. came to the Papal throne he was again permitted to act ; but the French finally suppressed him when they brought back the Pope from Gaeta.

The Teatro Fiano was at the corner of the Piazza San Lorenzo in Lucina, and the Corso in the old Fiano Palace. Before the *portone*, every night, stood a fellow with a trumpet, who sounded a call, and cried out to the passers-by to come and buy their tickets. “*Venite, venite tutti*,” he cried, “*a sentire Cassandrino. Se comprate biglietti—grazie—se non*”—here a pause, and “*accidente*” was added in a low voice.

Cassandrino was a superior or noble *Rugantino*, with more bombast and swell of pretension, but less menacing and defiant. One was a satire on the nobility, and the other the buffoon of the people. *Rugantino* (the growler) was so called because he was always complaining of his fate, always maltreated, always threatening revolt, and always bearing any amount of oppression with dogged patience. He was a short swaggering fellow, in a long dress coat, tricornered hat and wig, carried a great sword, with which he was always threatening to do great exploits, all alone,—talked in big words, to give an idea of bloodthirstiness and courage, but in moments of danger took to his heels in the most abject manner. Each of these characters speaks in the lowest popular dialect of his country—*Stenterello* in pure Tuscan *patois*, *Pulcinella* in the *Lazzaroni* Neapolitan, and *Cassandrino* in the Trastevere dialect. These dialects of Italy are very different. The Venetian is soft and whispering ; one of its chief peculiarities being in the constant use of the *x*, *s*, or *z*,

which have usurped the place of the harder consonants. The Genoese is peculiarly harsh and unpleasant, abounding in the nasal tones of the French. The Neapolitan mumbles his truncated words, while the letters *m* and *n* seem to be constantly running about and getting between their legs. The Florentine and Siense are in the same sad case with the letter *h*; it is omnipresent, forcing itself headlong into the body of words where it has no business, and usurping the place of *c*, *ch*, and *qu*. The pronunciation of the Siense is, however, far more agreeable than that of the Florentines; and even among the common people a purity and richness of language is preserved which is quite remarkable.

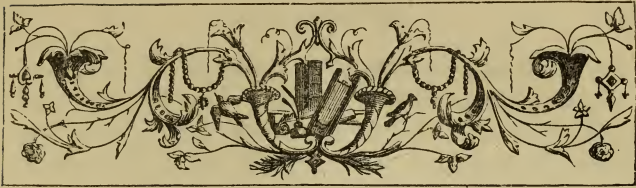
The Roman *patois* is different from all, but its features are not so strongly marked. Dante, in his book "De Vulgari Eloquentia," calls it the most unpleasant of all Italian dialects; but I fear there was a little Tuscan jealousy in this judgment. The Florentines were always violent upon the subject of their own dialect, and their judgment may fairly be questioned, when we recall the persecution to which Girolamo Gigli was subjected by the Academia della Crusca, because he dared, in his celebrated "Vocabolario Cateriniano," to put forward the claims of his native Siena, in opposition to those of Florence. For this offence he was not only expelled from the Academy, but a suit was instituted against him, and he was prohibited from continuing to print his *vocabolario* when he had reached the letter R. Nor were the Academicians satisfied with this. They went so far as to induce the Grand Duke to order all the copies of his book to be burnt by the public executioner, and to exile the author, until he was driven by the pressure of poverty and threats of further persecution to make a forced retractation. We may therefore take the judgment of Dante, perhaps, as not free from a certain prejudice in favour of his own Florence. In its vocabulary the Tuscan is undoubtedly richer than the Roman, but the slow open utter-

ance of the Romans is so universally admitted to be the most agreeable in Italy, as to have passed into the saying, *Lingua Toscana in bocca Romana*. No one passing directly from Naples, Genoa, or Florence to Rome, can fail to experience a certain relief in the change from the thick confused utterance of the one to the clear enunciation of the other. Nor are there wanting those who affirm that the Roman dialect retains more of the Latin than is to be found in the Tuscan, which, though fuller in its vocabulary, is more of a *patois*. If you would hear the Trastevere dialect, go to the Teatro Emiliano, where there are theatrical performances every night, and you will hear it as it is spoken by the lowest classes in Rome.

As a specimen of this dialect, spoken by the lower classes, I will here transcribe one of a number of humorous and sarcastic sonnets, written by Signor Belli, a Roman, and circulated only in MS., on the labours of the Pope. It is a good specimen of the Roman humour as well as of the Roman dialect. *Il* and *del*, it will be observed, are changed to *er* and *der*, and the final letters of the infinitive are omitted, the accent being thrown on the last vowel:—

“Le Fatiche der Papa.

“ Ah ! non fa niente er Papa ? ah non fa niente !
 Ah non fa niente, lui, brutte marmotte,
 Accusi vi piasse un accidente !
 Come fatica sempre, giorno e notte !
 Chi parla con Dio onnipotente ?
 Chi assorve tanti fiji de mignotte ?
 Chi va in carrozza a benedi la gente,
 E qua e la manna l' indulgenze a botte ?
 E chi je conta li cotrini sui ?
 Non è lui che ci fa li cardinali ?
 Le gabelle, per Dio, non le fa lui ?
 E quel altra fatica da facchino
 Di strappà tutto er giorno memoriali
 E buttalli a pezzetti in der cestino.”



CHAPTER XI.

PASQUIN.

ROMAN wit is essentially satirical, and its true type is *Pasquino*. He is the public satirist, who lances his pointed jests at every absurdity and abuse. There he sits on his pedestal behind the Palazzo Braschi, a mutilated *torso*, which, in the days of its pride, was a portion of a noble group, representing, as it is supposed, Menelaus dragging the dead body of Patroclus from the fight. Few of those who pass this almost shapeless fragment would imagine that it was once considered as one of the noblest works of ancient art. Yet this is the case. In the life of Bernini, written by his son Domenico, we are assured that this distinguished sculptor considered it as equal in merit to the *Belvidere torso* of the Vatican, and called it his master; while Michael Angelo preferred the Vatican *torso*. "On one occasion," says his biographer, "having been asked by a noble stranger which statue of all in Rome he considered to be the most excellent, he replied, 'The Pasquino;’ whereupon the stranger, supposing himself jested with, became very angry, and was on the point of attacking the artist. Of these two *torsi* he was wont to say, that they exhibited the greatest beauty and perfection of nature without any of the affectation of art."*

* Vita di Cav. Giov. Lorenz. Bernini, Firenze, 1782.

This statement is confirmed by Filippo Bertinucci, who relates that “Bernini considered the Laocoon and Pasquino to contain all the best characteristics of art, since in them existed the perfection of nature without the affectation of art; but that the *torso* and the Pasquino, to him, seemed to possess a greater perfection of style than the Laocoon, though the latter was entire and the former was but a fragment. Between Pasquino and the Torso Belvidere, the difference, he thought, was not very perceptible, and was only apparent to a person of knowledge, but on the whole he preferred the Pasquino.”

A repetition of this group is under the Loggie dei Lanzi at Florence, but it is far inferior in execution. Though the Pasquino has suffered terribly, there are still portions which show the same masterly style that is exhibited in the *torso* of Hercules, and it would seem most probable that they were both from the same hand, as they are undoubtedly of the same school.

The subject of this group has been much discussed by antiquarians. Winckelmann supposed it to be a statue of Hercules, from the fact, stated by him, that on the helmet was carved the battle with the Centaurs; Dante seems to have thought it a statue of Mars;* Paolo Alessandro Maffei speaks of it as representing the body of Ajax Telamon supported by a soldier, and remarks that others have supposed it to be a gladiatorial duel, or an Alexander who has fainted while bathing in the river Cydnus.† All these opinions are rejected by Visconti on sufficient grounds, and he declares that in his judgment it represents Menelaus bearing the body of Patroclus away from the battle.‡ Whatever may have been the subject of this once beautiful and now ruined work,

* Inferno. xiii. v. 196. Bocchi ampl. del. Cinelli, p. 115.

† Maffei Statue. Cav. xlii.

‡ See Notizie delle due Famose Statue di Pasquino e Marforio, &c. Roma, 1854, with a letter from Visconti.

it is scarcely less famous under its modern name. Pasquino is now the mouthpiece of the most pungent Roman wit.

The companion and rival of Pasquin in the early days was Marforio. This was a colossal statue representing a river god, and received its name from the Forum of Mars, where it was unearthed in the 16th century. Other friends too had Pasquin, who took part in his satiric *conversazioni* and carried on dialogues with him. Among these was Madama Lucrezia, whose ruined figure still may be seen near the church of S. Marco behind the Venetian palace;—the Facchino, or porter, who empties his barrel still in the Corso, though his wit has run dry;—the Abbate Luigi of the Palazzo Valle;—and the battered Babbuino, who still presides over his fountain in the Via del Babbuino, and gives his name to the street, but who has now lost his features and his voice. Marforio, however, was the chief speaker next to Pasquin, and he still at times joins with him in a satiric dialogue. Formerly there was a constant strife of wit between the two, and a lampoon by Pasquin was sure to call out a reply from Marforio. But of late years Marforio has been imprisoned in the Court of the Campidoglio, and, like many other free speakers, locked up and forbidden to speak, so that Pasquin has it all his own way. In the time of the Revolution of 1848, he made friends with Don Pirlone, and uttered in print his satires. “Il Don Pirlone” was the title of the Roman Charivari of this period. It was issued daily, except on *fiesta*-days, was very liberal in its politics, and extremely bitter against the *papalini*, French and Austrians. The caricatures, though coarsely executed, were full of humour and spirit, and give strong evidence that the satiric fire for which Rome has been always celebrated, though smouldering, is always ready to burst into flame. Take for instance, as a specimen, the caricature which appeared on the 15th of June, 1849. The Pope is here represented in the act of celebrating mass. Oudinot, the French general,

acts as the attendant priest, kneeling at the step of the altar, and holding up the pontifical robes. The bell of the mass is an imperial crown. A group of military officers surrounds the altar, with a row of bayonets behind them. The altar candles are in the shape of bayonets. The Pope is just raising the host, but the Christ on the crucifix has detached his arms from the cross-bars, and covers his face with his hands as if to shut out from his sight the impious spectacle. Lightnings dart from the cross, and from the cup which should hold the blood of the Lord issues a hissing serpent. On the sole of one of Oudinot's boots are the words "*Accomodamento Lesseps*," and on the other, *Articolo V. della Costituzione*;"—thus showing that he tramples not only on the convention made by Lesseps with the Roman triumvirate on the 31st of May, but also on the French Constitution, the fifth article of which says: "*La République Française n'emploie jamais ses forces contre la liberté d'aucun peuple.*"* Beneath the picture is this motto: "*Ha incominciato il servizio colla messa, ed ha finito colle bombe.*"—"He has begun the service with mass, and completed it with bombs."

On the 2nd of July, 1849, the French entered Rome, and "Il Don Pirlone" was issued for the last time. The engraving in this number represents a naked female figure lying lifeless on the ground, with a cap of liberty on her head,—on a dunghill near by a cock is crowing loudly,—while a French general is covering the body with earth. Beneath are these significant words: "*Ma, caro Signor Becchino, siete poi ben sicuro che sia morta?*"—"But, dear Mr. Undertaker, are you so perfectly sure that she is dead?"

That day Don Pirlone died, and all his works were confis-

* When the French army advanced against Rome, they found the road from Civita Vecchia strewn with large placards, on which this clause of their Constitution was printed; so that they were literally obliged to trample its provisions under foot in making as unjustifiable an attack upon the liberties of a people as was ever recorded in history.

cated. Some, however, still remain, guarded jealously in secret hiding-places and talked about in whispers; but, if you are curious, you may have the luck to buy a copy for thirty or forty Roman *scudi*.*

The first acquaintance we make with Pasquin is as an abandoned limbless fragment of an antique statue, which serves as a butt for boys to throw stones at, and for other "slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." Near by him lives a tailor, named Pasquino, skilful in his trade, and still more skilful in his epigrams. At his shop many of the *litterati*, prelates, courtiers, and wits of the town meet to order their robes and dresses, to report scandal, to anatomize reputations, and to kill their time. Pasquino's humour was contagious, and so many sharp epigrams were made in his shop that it grew to be famous. After Pasquino's death, in mending the street, it became necessary to remove the old statue, embedded in the ground near by, and to get it out of the way it was set up at the side of his shop. The people then, in joke, said that Pasquino had come back, and so the statue acquired this nickname, which it has ever since retained. This, at least, is the account given of it by Castelvetro, in a discourse upon a *canzone* of Annibale Caro, published in 1553, on the faith of the learned and venerable Messer Antonio Tibaldeo of Ferrara. However this be, there is no doubt that the custom soon grew up to stick to the statue any lampoon, epigram, or satiric verses which the author desired to be anonymous, and to pretend that it was a "*pasquinata*." From this time Pasquino becomes a name and a power. His tongue never could be ruled. He had his bitter saying on everything. Vainly government strove to suppress him. At one time he narrowly escaped being

* Mr. Charles E. Norton, in his admirable volume on "Travel and Study in Italy," gives an interesting account of Don Pirlone more at length, and with descriptions of several others of the caricatures.

thrown into the Tiber by Adrian VI., who was deeply offended at some of his sarcasms,—but he was saved from this fate by the wisdom of the Spanish legate, who gravely counselled the Pope to do no such act, lest he should thus teach all the frogs in the river to croak pasquinades. In reference to the various attempts made to silence him, he says, in an epigram addressed to Paul III. :—

“Ut canerent data multa olim sunt vatibus æra ;
Ut taceam, quantum tu mihi, Paule, dabis ?”

“Great were the sums once paid to poets for singing ;
How much will you, oh Paul, give me to be silent ?”

Finally, his popularity became so great, that all epigrams, good or bad, were affixed to him. Against this he remonstrated, crying :—

“Me miserum ! copista etiam mihi carmina figit ;
Et tribuit nugas jam mihi quisque suas.”

“Alas ! the veriest copyist sticks upon me his verses ;
Every one now on me his wretched trifles bestows.”

This remonstrance seems to have been attended with good results, for shortly after he says :—

“Non homo me melior Romæ est. Ego nil peto ab ullo.
Non sum verbosus ; hic sedeo et taceo.”

“No man at Rome is better than I ; I seek nothing from any.
I am never verbose ; here I sit, and am silent.”

Of late years no collection has been made, as far as I know, of the sayings of Pasquin ; and it is only here and there that they can be found recorded in books. But in 1544 a volume of 637 pages was printed, with the title “Pasquillorum Tomi duo,” in which, among a mass of epigrams and satires drawn from various sources, a considerable number of real pasquinades were preserved. This volume is now very rare and costly, most of the copies

having been burnt at Rome and elsewhere, on account of the many satires it contained against the Romish Church,—so rare, indeed, that the celebrated scholar Daniel Heinsius supposed his copy to be unique, as he stated in the inscription written by him on its fly-leaf :—

“Roma meos fratres igni dedit—unica phoenix
Vivo—aureis venio centum Heinsio.”

“Rome to the fire gave my brothers—I, the single phoenix,
Live—by Heinsius bought for a hundred pieces of gold.”

In this, however, he was mistaken. There are several other copies now known to be in existence.

This collection was edited by Cœlius Secundus Curio, a Piedmontese, who, being a reformer, had suffered persecution, confiscation, exile, and imprisonment in the Inquisition. From the latter he escaped, and while spending his later days in exile in Switzerland he printed this volume, and sent it forth to harass his enemies and bigoted opponents. The chief aim of the book was to attack the Romish Church ; and some of the satires are evidently German, and probably from the hands of his friends. It is greatly to be regretted that no other collection exists ; and since so great a success has attended the admirable collections of popular songs and proverbs in Tuscany, it is to be hoped that some competent Italian may soon be found who will have the spirit and patience to collect the pasquinades of more modern days.

The earliest pasquinades were directed against the Borgian Pope, Alexander VI. (Sextus), the infamy of whose life can scarcely be written. Of him says Pasquin :—

“Sextus Tarquinius, Sextus Nero—Sextus et iste ;
Semper sub Sextis perdita Roma fuit.”

“Sextus Tarquinius, Sextus Nero—this also is Sextus ;
Always under the Sextuses Rome has been ruined,”

Again, in allusion to the fact that he obtained his election

by the grossest bribery, and, as Guicciardini expresses it, "infected the whole world by selling without distinction holy and profane things," Pasquino says :—

"Vendit Alexander claves, altaria, Christum :
Emerat ille prius, vendere jure potest."

"Alexander sells the keys, the altar, Christ :
He who bought them first has a good right to sell."

Here, too, is another savage epigram on the Borgian Pope, referring to the murder of his son Giovanni, duca di Gandia. His brother, Cesare, duca di Valentino, slew him at night, and threw his body into the Tiber, from which it was fished out the next morning :—

"Piscatorem hominum ne te non, Sexte, putemus,
Piscaris natum retibus ecce tuum."

"Lest we should think you not a fisher of men, oh Sextus !
Lo ! for your very son with nets you fish."

No epigrams worth recording seem to have been made during the short reign of Pius III. ; but Julius II., the warlike, fiery, impetuous soldier, drew upon himself the constant fire of Pasquin. Alluding to the story that, when leading his army out of Rome, he threw the keys of Peter into the Tiber, saying that henceforth he would trust to the sword of Paul, Pasquin, merely repeating his impetuous words, says :—

"Cum Petri nihil efficiant ad proelia claves,
Auxilio Pauli forsitan ensis erit."

"Since nothing the keys of Peter for battle can profit,
The sword of Paul, perhaps, may be of use."

And again, referring to the beard which Julius was the first among the Popes of comparatively late days to wear :—

"Huc barbam Pauli, gladium Pauli, omnia Pauli ;
Claviger ille nihil ad mea vota Petrus."

"The beard of Paul, and the sword of Paul—all things of Paul for me ;
As for that key-bearer Peter, he's not to my liking at all."

But of all the epigrams on Julius, none is so stern and fierce as this:—

“Julius est Romæ—quid abest? Date, numina, Brutum.
Nam quoties Romæ est Julius, illa perit.”

“Julius is at Rome—what is wanting? Ye gods, give us Brutus.
For whenever at Rome is Julius, the city is lost.”

If to Julius Pasquin was severe, he was scathing to his successor, Leo X. Many of these epigrams are too coarse to bear translation;* here is one, however, more decent, if less bitter than many:—

“Dona date, astantes; versus ne reddite: sola
Imperat æthereis alma Moneta deis.”

“Bring me gifts, spectators! bring me not verses;
Divine Money alone rules the ethereal gods.”

And again, referring to Leo's taste for buffoons, he says:—

“Cur non te fingi scurram, Pasquille, rogasti?
Cum Romæ scurris omnia jam liceant.”

“Pasquil, why have you never asked to be made a buffoon?
All things now are permitted at Rome to buffoons.”

Here is another, referring to the story, current in Rome, that Leo's death was occasioned by poison, and on account of its suddenness there was no time to administer to him the last sacraments:—

“Sacra sub extrema, si forte requiritis, horâ
Cur Leo non potuit sumere: vendiderat.”

“If you desire to hear why at his last hour Leo
Could not the sacraments take—know—he had sold them.”

During the short reign of the ascetic Adrian VI., Pasquin

* One of these, savage and untranslatable, is as follows:—

“Roma, vale! Satis est Romam vidisse. Revertar
Quum leno, meretrix, scurra, cinædus ero.”

seems to have been comparatively silent, perhaps through respect for that hard, bigoted, but honest Pope. Under his successor, Clement VII., Rome was besieged, taken, and sacked by the Constable de Bourbon, and through the horrors of those days Pasquin's voice was seldom heard. One saying of his, however, has been preserved, which was uttered during the period of the Pope's imprisonment in the Castle St. Angelo. With a sneer at his infallibility and his imprisonment, he says: "*Papa non potest errare*" (The Pope cannot err nor go astray),—*errare* having both meanings. But if Pasquin spared the Pope during his life, he threw a handful of epigrams on his coffin at his death. Under a portrait of the physician to whose ignorance Clement's death was attributed, Pasquin placed this sentence: "*Ecce agnus Dei! ecce qui tollit peccata mundi!*" And again, in reference to this same physician, Matteo Curzio, or Curtius:—

"Curtius occidit Clementem—Curtius auro
Donandus, per quem publica parta salus."

"Curtius has killed our Clement—let gold then be given
To Curtius, for this securing the public health."

On Paul III., the Farnese Pope, Pasquin exercised his wit, but not always very successfully. This Pope was celebrated for his nepotism, and for the unscrupulous ways in which he endeavoured to build up his house and enrich his family; and one of Pasquin's epigrams refers to this, as well as to the well-known fact that he built his palace by despoiling the Colosseum of its travertine:—

"Oremus pro Papa Paulo, quia zelus
Domus suæ comedit illum."

"Let us pray for Pope Paul, for his zeal
For his house is eating him up."

With Paul III. ceases the record of the "*Pasquillorum Tomi duo*," published at Eleutheropolis in 1544, and we

now hunt out only rarely here and there an epigram. Against Sextus V., that cruel, stern old man, who never lifted his eyes from the ground until he had attained that great reward for all his hypocritical humility, the papal chair, several epigrams are recorded. One of these, in the form of dialogue, and given by Leti in his life of Sextus, is worth recording for the story connected with it. Pasquin makes his appearance in a very dirty shirt, and being asked by Marforio the reason of this, answers, that he cannot procure a clean shirt because his washerwoman has been made a princess by the Pope—thus referring to the story that the Pope's sister had formerly been a laundress. This soon came to the ears of the Pope, who ordered that the satirist should be sought for and punished severely. All researches, however, were vain. At last, by his order, and in his name, placards were posted in the public streets, promising, in case the author would reveal his name, to grant him not only his life, but a present of a thousand pistoles; but threatening, in case of his discovery by any other person, to hang him forthwith, and give the reward to the informer. The satirist thereupon avowed the ownership and demanded the money. Sextus, true to the letter of his proclamation, granted him his life and paid him the thousand pistoles; but, in utter violation of its spirit, and saying that he had not promised absolution from all punishment, ordered his hands to be struck off and his tongue to be bored, "to hinder him from being so witty in the future."

But Pasquin was not silenced even by this cruel revenge, and a short time after, in reference to the tyranny of Sextus, appeared a caricature representing the Pope as King Stork devouring the Romans as frogs, with the motto "*Merito hæc patimur.*"

Against Urban VIII., the Barberini Pope, whose noble palace was built out of the quarry of the Colosseum, who tore the bronze plates from the roof of the Pantheon to cast

into the tasteless *baldacchino* of St. Peter's, and under whose pontificate so many antique buildings were despoiled, Pasquin uttered the famous saying :—

“ Quod non fecerunt barbari, fecerunt Barberini.”

“ What the barbarians have not done, the Barberini have done.”

And on the occasion of Urban's issuing a bull, excommunicating all persons who took snuff in the churches at Seville, Pasquin quoted from Job this passage : “ *Contra folium quod vento rapitur ostendis potentiam tuam? et stipulam siccam persequeris?* ”—“ Against a leaf driven to and fro by the wind wilt thou show thy strength? and wilt thou pursue the light stubble?”

Innocent X. and the profligate Donna Olympia Maidalchini afforded also a target to Pasquin's arrows. Of the Pope he says :—

“ Magis amat Olympiam quam Olympum.”

“ Olympia he loves more than Olympus.”

During the reign of Innocent XI. the holy office flourished, and its prisons were put in requisition for those who dared to think freely or to speak freely. Pasquin, in reference to this, says : “ *Se parliamo, in galera; se scriviamo, impiccati; se stiamo in quiete, al santo uffizio. Eh! —che bisogna fare?* ”—“ If we speak, to the galleys; if we write, the gallows; if we keep quiet, to the Inquisition. Eh!—what then must we do?”

Throughout Rome, the stranger is struck by the constant recurrence of the inscription “ *Munificentia Pii Sexti* ” on statues, and monuments, and repaired ruins, and big and little antiquities. When, therefore, this Pope reduced the *pagnotto*, or loaf of two *baiocchi*, considerably in size, one of them was found hung on Pasquin's neck, with the same inscription—“ *Munificentia Pii Sexti.* ”

Against the nepotism of this same Pope, when he was

building the great Braschi palace, Pasquin wrote these lines :—

“Tres habuit fauces, et terno Cerberus ore
 Latratus intra Tartara nigra dabat.
 Et tibi plena fame tria sunt vel quatuor ora
 Quæ nulli latrant, quemque sed illa vorant.”

“Three jaws had Cerberus, and three mouths as well,
 Which barked into the blackest deeps of hell.
 Three hungry mouths have you—ay ! even four,
 Which bark at none, but every one devour.”

During the French Revolution, the occupation of Rome by Napoleon, Pasquin uttered some bitter sayings, and among them this :—

“ I Francesi son tutti ladri—
 Non tutti—ma Buona parte.”

Here also is one referring to the institution of the Cross of the Legion of Honour in France, which is admirable in wit :—

“In tempi men leggiadri e più feroci
 S’ appicavano i ladri in su le croci :
 In tempi men feroci e più leggiadri
 S’ appicano le croci in su i ladri.”

“In times less pleasant, and more fierce, of old
 The thieves were hung upon the cross—we’re told :
 In times less fierce, more pleasant, like to-day,
 Crosses are hung upon the thieves—they say.”

When the Emperor Francis of Austria visited Rome, Pasquin called him,—“ *Gaudium urbis—Fletus provinciarum—Risus mundi.*”

A clever epigram was also made on Canova’s statue of Italy, which was represented as draped :—

“Questa volta Canova l’ha sbagliata,—
 Ha l’Italia vestita ed è spogliata.”

“For once Canova surely has tripped ;
 Italy is not draped, but stripped.”

Upon the marriage of a certain Cesare with a young girl named Roma, Pasquin issued this warning to the bridegroom: "*Cæsar! cave ne Roma respublica fiat!*" To which Cæsar answered the next day: "*Cæsar imperat.*" "*Ergo coronabitur,*" was Pasquin's response.

The latter days of Pius IX. have opened a large field for Pasquin, and his epigrams have a flavour quite equal to that of the best of which we have any record. When, in 1858, the Pope made a journey through the provinces of Tuscany, leaving the administration of affairs in the hands of Cardinal Antonelli and the other cardinals of the Sacred College, the following dialogue was found on Pasquin:—

"Dunque il pastore se n' è andato?"

"Sì, Signore."

"E chi lascia a custodire la grege?"

"I cani."

"E chi custodisce i cani?"

"Il mastino."

"The shepherd, then, is gone away?"

"Yes, sir."

"And whom has he left to take care of the flock?"

"The dogs."

"And who keeps the dogs?"

"The mastiff."

The wit of Pasquin, as of all the Romans, is never purely verbal, for the pun, simply as a pun, is little relished in Italy; ordinarily the wit lies in the thought and image, though sometimes it is expressed by a play upon words as well, as in the epigram on Buonaparte. The ingenious method adopted by the Italians, a year or two ago, to express their political sympathies with Victor Emmanuel, was peculiarly characteristic of Italian humour. Forbidden by the police to make any public demonstration in his favour, the government were surprised by the constant shouts of "*Viva Verdi! Viva Verdi!*" at all the theatres, as well as by finding these words scrawled on all the walls

of the city. But they soon discovered that the cries for Verdi were through no enthusiasm for this composer, but only because his name was an acrostic signifying

V-ictor E-mmanuel, R-e d-i I-talia.

Of a similar character was a satire in dialogue, and which appeared a year or two ago, when all the world at Rome was waiting and hoping for the death of King Bomba of execrated memory. Pasquin imagines a traveller who has just returned from Naples, and inquires of him what he has seen there :—

“ Ho visto un tumore.”

“ Un tumore ? ma che cosa è un tumore ?”

“ Leva il *t* per risposta.”

“ Ah ! un umore—ma questo umore porta danno ?”

“ Leva l' *u* per risposta.”

“ More ! che peccato ! ma quando ?—fra breve ?”

“ Leva l' *m*.”

“ Ore ! fra ore ! ma chi ha dunque quest' imore ?”

“ Leva l' *o*.”

“ Rè ! Il Rè ! Ho piacere davvero ! Ma poi, dove andra ?”

“ Leva l' *r*.”

“ E—eh ! e-e-e-h !” *

with a shrug and prolonged tone peculiarly Roman—indicative of an immense doubt as to Paradise, and little question as to the other place—is the last answer.

* “ I have seen a tumour.”

“ A tumour ? but what is a tumour ?”

“ Take away the *t* for answer.”

“ Ah ! a humour ; but is this humour dangerous ?”

“ Take away the *u*.”

“ He dies ! what a pity ! but when ?—shortly ?”

“ Take away the *m*.”

“ Hours ! in a few hours ! but who then has this humour ?”

“ Take away the *o*.”

“ King ! the king ! I am delighted. . . But then, where will he go ?”

“ Take away the *r*.”

Two years ago Pasquin represents himself as having joined the other plenipotentiaries at the conference of Zurich, where he represents the court of Rome—Austria speaks German, France speaks French, neither of which languages Pasquin understands. On being interrogated as to the views of Rome, he answers that, being a priest, he only speaks Latin, not Italian, and that, in his opinion, “*Sicut erat in principio, est nunc, et semper erit, in omnia sæcula sæculorum—Amen.*”—“As it was in the beginning, it is now, and ever shall be, for ever and ever—Amen.”

This is as pure a specimen of true Roman wit as can be found. Of a rather different and punning character was the epigram lately made upon the movement of the Piedmontese and Garibaldians on Naples and Sicily: “*Tutti stanno in viaggio—soldati vanno per terra, marinari vanno per mare, e preti vanno in aria.*”—“Everybody is in movement—the soldiers go by land, the sailors by sea, and the priests vanish into air.”

And here, too, is another, full of spirit and point, which shall be the last in these pages. When the conference at Zurich was proposed, it was rumoured that Cardinal Antonelli was to go as the representative of the Roman States, and to be accompanied by Monsignor Barile; upon which Pasquin said: “*Il Cardinale di Stato va via con Barile, ma tornerà col fiasco*”—which is untranslatable.

If one would see the characteristic theatres of the *basso popolo*, and study their manners, he should go to the Teatro Emiliano in the Piazza Navona, or the Fico, so called from the street in which it is situated. At the former the acting is by respectable puppets; at the latter the plays are performed by actors, or “*personaggi*,” as they are called. The love for the acting of *burattini*, or puppets, is universal among the lower classes throughout Italy, and in some cities, especially in Genoa, no pains are spared in their

costume, construction, and movement, to render them life-like. They are made of wood, are generally from two to three feet in height, with very large heads, and supernatural glaring eyes that never wink, and are clad in all the splendours of tinsel, velvet, and steel. Their joints are so flexible, that the least weight or strain upon them effects a dislocation, and they are moved by wires attached to their heads and extremities. Though the largest are only about half the height of a man, yet, as the stage and all the appointments and scenery are upon the same scale of proportion, the eye is soon deceived and accepts them as of life-size. But if by accident a hand or arm of one of the wire-pullers appears from behind the scenes, or descends below the hangings, it startles you by its portentous size, and the audience in the stage-boxes, instead of reducing the *burattini* to Lilliputians by contrast, as they lean forward, become themselves Brobdingnagians, with elephantine hands and heads.

Do not allow yourself to suppose that there is anything ludicrous to the audience in the performances of these wooden *burattini*. Nothing, on the contrary, is more serious. No human being could be so serious. Their countenances are solemn as death, and more unchanging than the face of a clock. Their terrible gravity when, with drooping heads and collapsed arms, they fix on you their great goggle eyes, is at times ghastly. They never descend into the regions of conscious farce. The plays they perform are mostly heroic, romantic, and historical. They stoop to nothing which is not startling in incident, imposing in style, and *grandiose* in movement. The wars of the Paladins, the heroic adventures of knights and ladies of romance, the tragedies of the middle ages, the prodigies of the melodramatic world, are within their special province. The heroes that tread the *fantoccini* stage are doughty warriors, who perform impossible feats of prowess, slay

armies with a single arm, rescue injured damsels, express themselves in loud and boastful language, utter exalted sentiments, and are equally admirable in love and war. No worthy *fantoccino* shrinks before an army, or leaves the board of battle till it is covered with the corpses of his enemies.

The audience listen with grave and profound interest. To them the actors are not *fantoccini*, but heroes. Their inflated and extravagant discourse is simply grand and noble. They are the mighty x which represents the unknown quantity of boasting which potentially exists in the bosom of every one. Do not laugh when you enter, or the general look of surprise and annoyance will at once recall you to the proprieties of the occasion. You might as well laugh in a church.

I know no better way of giving an idea of the ordinary performances at the Teatro Emiliano and the Teatro delle Muse, as the Fico magniloquently calls itself on the bills, than by an account of an evening I passed at them last June.

At each theatre there are two performances, or *camerate*, every evening, one commencing at *Ave Maria*, and the other at ten o'clock. We arrived at the Teatro Emiliano just too late for the first, as we learned at the ticket-office. "What is that great noise of drums inside?" asked we. "*Battaglie*," said the ticket-seller. "Shall we see a battle in the next piece?" "*Eh, sempre battaglie*,"—always battle,—was the reproving answer.

Outside were two hand-carts; one with refreshments of sherbets, or "*pappine*," as they are called in Trastevere dialect, sold at one *baiocco* the little glass; and the other filled with oblong slabs of hard stony gingerbread and "*bruscolini*," or pumpkin seeds salted and cooked in a furnace; which are the favourite picking of the Roman populace on all festal occasions.

The bill pasted outside informed us that the *burattini* were to play to-night, "*La Grandiosa opera intitolata il Belisario, ossia le avventure di Oreste, Ersilia, Falsierone, Selinquerro, ed il terribil Gobbo.*"—"The grandiose opera entitled Belisarius, or the adventures of Orestes, Ersilia, Falsierone, Selenquerro, and the terrible Hunchback." In the names themselves there was a sound of horror and fear. Prices in the *platea*, two *baiocchi*; in the *loggiata*, three *baiocchi*. Private boxes are also to be obtained for five *baiocchi* the seat: and some of my female friends having taken a box one night, were received by the audience on their entrance with loud cheers. We, however, only allowed ourselves the luxury of a *loggiata* seat.

But there are three-quarters of an hour to wait before the performance begins—how shall we pass them? "At the Fico," suggested the ticket-seller. "There you may pass the time tolerably; though," he added contemptuously, "there are no '*fantoccini*' there, nothing but '*personaggi*.'" Acknowledging the inferiority of mere human acting, as compared with that of the puppets, we accepted the advice, which seemed good, and off we set through the narrow, damp streets and squares, where great blocks of moonlight and shadow lay cut out on the pavement, and finally arrived before a shabby house, which we recognised as the theatre by the two lanterns hung outside. Some few persons were standing round the door; and from the open windows of the theatre itself, others, leaning out, cried across the street to the vendors of *bruscolini* to toss them up a *cornetto* of seeds. The evening was warm outside, but the air within the *loggiata* was thick, slab, and steamy with perspiration. The curtain was down. The audience, in a state of extreme dishabille, were, some of them, sprawling on the benches; some leaning over the front of the *loggiata*, and conversing with friends in the pit below. Here were men with by no means immaculate linen, many of them in

their shirt-sleeves and bare feet, as they had come from their work. Mothers with only a chemise from the waist up, drawn round the neck, and soothing the fretful babies they held in their arms by the simple and efficacious method of giving them the breast. Nothing at all improper was thought or done, but the audience was simply different from what one sees at the Apollo, and less attention had been paid to show—decidedly. In the centre was a three-armed brass chandelier for illumination; all three lights turned up high and in full smoke.

In a moment the bell tinkled, and out came an actor before the curtain, nearly touching with his head the top of the stage. He announced, to what he denominated "*il culto pubblico*," that the next week was to appear "*una bella baciocchetta*," and who, having too much "*vergogna*" to demand the favour of their company herself, had delegated "*il gentil invito*" to him. The *culto pubblico* manifested its interest in this announcement by a series of inquiries as to who she was, and when she would appear, and what was her name, and other similar questions; all of which being answered to their satisfaction, they promised to come; and the actor, bowing *addio*, bumped out of sight through the curtain, rather ignominiously.

Then the play began. The bill of fare was a pantomime entitled "*La Zingarella*," and a comedy, "*in dialetto Romanesco*," called "*Peppo er Chiavaro e Pepe er muratore, ovvero er primo giorno dello sposalizio alle quattro Fontane*." This was unfortunately over, it having been performed at the first *camerata*—for here, as at the Emiliano, are two performances nightly; one, the "*Lunga*," at five *baiocchi* the seat, and the second, the "*Corta*," at two *baiocchi*. We were forced, therefore, to content ourselves with "*La Zingarella*," which now began.

Two "*reali personaggi*," the king and the queen, first make their appearance, accompanied by a courtier and a

little girl, their daughter. They have come to walk in a garden. There is much gesticulation of pleasure and affection, pressure of both hands on the bosom, and wriggling of shoulders, pointing at the child, and making the circuit of their faces with the thumb and fingers, and floating out and waving of hands. This over, the "*reali personaggi*" motion *addio*, and leave the child alone with the courtier, who at once prays her to dance. She is not only "*prima ballerina*," but the whole "*corps de ballet*" in her one little person, though she is evidently not more than eight years of age. Nevertheless, the audience, which is far from critical, is charmed, and loudly applauds as she finishes a shawl dance with not the freshest gauze mantle, nor, shall I dare to say it (*con rispetto?*) the cleanest or best-gartered stockings. However, that is to be pardoned—they are probably her mother's. The courtier now leaves her alone for a moment, with no other apparent object than to enable two or three *Contrabandistas* (for of course the scene is in Spain, we knew that from the title of the pantomime) to rush in, seize the little princess, tear off her flower-wreath, and away with her. Immediately on their exit the courtier appears, followed by her royal parents, who, on finding her gone, make terrible pantomime of despair—beating their foreheads and rushing up and down the stage. The courtier then madly plunges through the *coulisses*, and reappears with the wreath, when a great *tableau* of horror takes place, and the curtain falls.

When the second act opens, ten years have elapsed, as a little *gamin* at our side assiduously explains, and the little girl has grown into a *Zingarella*—a fortune-teller. She now comes with the *Contrabandistas*, and meets the courtier and the courtier's son, who, naturally, is to be the *Deus ex machinâ*. Ah! it is a case of love at first sight. She tells his fortune—he gives her a bouquet—and then she is carried away by those cruel *Contrabandistas*. It is evidently all

over with him. How he presses his breast, and wriggles, and passes his thumb and finger round the outline of his face, and looks up to heaven deprecatingly! But the courtier is a hard father—he sternly commands him not to see her. But he escapes and flees to find her. In the next scene the tired *Contrabandistas* come in and sleep; she only wakes—to kiss her bouquet, and press her bosom and wriggle. Ah! who is this?—it is—ah! no!—it is not—yes! it is the courtier's son. They meet—what rapture!—he kneels to her—when suddenly the fierce *Contrabandistas* awake. There are passionate threats—he protests—swears he loves—points to the third finger of the left hand—implores heaven—will marry. All is agitation—when suddenly the *reali personaggi* and the courtier, escorted by two troops, rush in to find the lover. There are no fire-arms or swords used, but a violent wrestling and slinging about takes place, on a stage ten feet square, until the *Contrabandistas* give in, and the curtain falls.

The audience is now getting excited; already during this act they have cried loudly for cakes and *bruscolini*, and shot their hulls right and left in their excitement, and thrown the empty *cornetti* on the stage; now they scream for the *limonaro*—and he, as he carries round on his tray glasses of sugarless lemonade, with a lump of the lemon floating about in them, cries loudly, “*Qui si beve e si mangia per un baiocco.*” By that he means that one can drink the sour warm water and eat the lemon. Mean time, the babies getting hot, begin to fret and whine, when tinkle goes the bell behind the stage, open goes the chemise front for the baby's comfort, and up goes the curtain. It is a new scene—the royal apartment. One very dirty and rickety straw-bottomed chair constitutes its sole actual furniture—its throne,—the rest is supplied by the imagination. Hung on the lintel of the door is a portrait of a child—and such a portrait!—shades of Vandyke and Titian! The king enters and sits in

the one chair ; for obvious reasons the queen cannot follow his example. There is great sorrow, and weeping, and gesticulating at the portrait, in the midst of which the *Contrabandistas* are brought in with the *Zingarella*. Aha ! What wonderful resemblance is this between the portrait and the *Zingarella* ? It is difficult for the audience to perceive, but how astounding it seems to the king, queen, and courtier ! There is violent gesticulation and pointing from her to the portrait. Ah ! yes, it is—ah ! no, it is not. “ If she be my child a strawberry mark will be found on her right arm.” Agitated unbuttoning of the sleeve. There is the strawberry mark !—and everybody falls into everybody’s arms—she is found at last ! The courtier’s son and *Zingarella* kneel—and “ My blessing on you, my children,” is given. Then, with a fierce gesture, the *Contrabandistas* are ordered to execution. But ah ! the *Zingarella* is at the royal feet, and the royal clemency is shown—at which there is loud applause by the audience, and the curtain goes down.

“ Stop a moment, gentlemen,” says the *gamin* at our side—“ it is not yet finished. Now comes the betrothal.” The curtain rises again. There is a great, a magnificent illumination, consisting of five paper lanterns pinned to a curtain, spattered and splashed with green, to imitate foliage I suppose. It is in honour of the marriage. The king and queen, two courtiers, the bride and bridegroom, are all the company. The music is a fiddle and mandoline. And here a great difference was perceptible between the performances at the Fico and those at the Apollo. The *reali personaggi* did not sit in the left corner in chairs of state, sadly and stiffly looking on at the *prima ballerina* and the *corps de ballet*. No ! they and the courtiers did the dancing themselves, and polked and waltzed all together round the little stage, the king with one courtier, the queen with the other, and the *Zingarella* with her lover. This over, there came a grand *tableau*, with red Bengal lights blazing and

smoking behind the side-scenes, and casting a Der-Freischutz glare over the happy party,—and all was over.

Here, by-the-way, I am reminded of an incident which occurred one night to a friend of mine at the Fico. The abandoned lover came forward to the foot-lights, clasped his hands, and exclaimed pathetically, “*Dove sei tu, oh bell' angelo della mia vita?*” “*A San Michele,*” responded a voice from the pit, “*a San Michele.*” Now at San Michele are the prisons for loose women, who are “abandoned” in another sense; and the *personaggio* on the stage, enraged at this interruption, paused in his part, stopped short, shook his fingers into the pit at the audacious individual, and cried out fiercely, with a racy and approbrious epithet which I am forced to omit, “*Colla tua sorella—colla tua sorella.*” Having thus disburdened himself of his emotions, he continued his sentimental invocation of his “*bell' angelo del mio cor.*”

Delighted with this pantomime, we now retraced our steps to the Emiliano. The second *camerata* had not begun, and we strolled about the piazza. The great fountain of Bernini rose in the centre, its dark figures crouching under the obelisk that pointed silently its finger to the sky. The moonlight flooded the square and shone on the palaces and church, and the plashing water sounded soothingly as it fell into the marble basin. At a *caffè* close by we heard a thrumming guitar and a tingling mandoline, played by two men sitting on the table outside the door; several of the Trasteverini were gathered about, men and women, dancing the *saltarello* on the rough stones. In the intervals, a sturdy fellow, a little top-heavy with wine, was congratulating himself and his audience on the successes of Garibaldi, news of the taking of Como having just arrived. Then, accompanied by the mandoline and guitar, he began in the intervals of the *saltarello* to scream out a Neapolitan song, with all the jars and sudden breaks of voice which are so characteristic of their singing, until the piazza echoed.

We had listened to him so long that the play had already commenced when we entered the Emiliano. The audience was small, but the theatre, though devoted to the *burattini*, was larger, better, and cleaner than the Fico. The "*grandiosa opera*" of Belisario did not belie the general character of *Fantoccini* plays. It was "*sempre battaglie*." The scene when we entered was between two puppets, both dressed in armour, speaking in tremendous voices, and flourishing gigantic swords. One was a child-*Fantoccino*—the other probably *Selinguerra*. No attempt was made to conceal the agency by which the figures and their weapons were moved. Stout perpendicular wires, piercing the head and passing out of sight above the hangings, sustained the figures, and the hands and swords were moved by the same grossly apparent means. Each *Fantoccino* when it spoke went into a sudden convulsion, as if it were attacked by a fit of St. Vitus's dance, while the sword seemed animated with spasmodic life, and thrashed to and fro in the air with utter disregard to the warrior's anatomy, which it constantly and painfully dislocated with every movement. But no sooner had he ceased speaking than his arms fell into a helpless collapse, his head dropped drunkenly forward, or remained fixed in a dislocation glaring at nothing, and with his sword stiffly pointing up to the ceiling, and his legs hanging in the air or huddled under him, so as to leave him quite out of balance, he awaited impotently the answer of his opponent. It was a violent dispute that was taking place between the youth and *Selinguerra* and his lieutenant, who were threatening to destroy the castle of the "*terribil Gobbo*." Both these doughty warriors were a couple of inches at least above the floor, which they never descended or condescended to touch, save by way of emphasis, when down they came on their heels with a sharp wooden rap, and then jerked suddenly up again. The dispute was tremendous. They launched at each other, in loud voices, terrible threats and

challenges. *Selinguerra* was especially ferocious, and "*Chi sei tu che osi!*" he cried to the youth; but the latter, not to be outdone in boasting or fury, with a wild spasm of sword and dangling about of his arms, exclaimed "*Trema! che son il figlio del terribil Gobbo,*" and then collapsed in silence. "*Ah ha,*" with a roar, responded his opponent, "*male hai fatto a palesarlo—non posso più contenere il mio immenso furor. Preparati a morir!*" and with a galvanic twitch and a thundering rap of his heels on the floor, he shook defiance at the bold youth. But the youth now showed himself the true son of the terrible *Gobbo*. He roused from the collapse in which he had fallen, and coming down with *his* heels too (as if, Antæus like, to acquire new strength by touching the ground), he jerked his head and limbs, flung out wildly one leg, and waved a challenge in the name of St. Vitus. Now ensued a terrible encounter. *Selinguerra*, backed by his lieutenant, attacked the heroic son of the *Gobbo*, and all three, rising higher from the floor in their excitement, dashed promiscuously together, clashing their swords furiously, and swinging backwards and forwards half the length of the stage, while their helpless legs beat to and fro in the air. All the while a drum behind the scenes was "rolling rapidly." It was encouraging, however, to see how bravely the son of the *Gobbo* held his own. Despite the terrible blows he received on his head, each of which would have done for ever for a mere "*personaggio,*" and the excited efforts he made with his arms and legs, he never for a moment lost his courage or wind. His expression never changed, but on his countenance might still be seen the same calm supernatural glare, the same unwinking eyes. At last, however, he was brought to his knees, or rather, to be accurate, he was brought half-way down backward, with his legs at an angle of forty-five degrees, sitting on nothing at all, and still shaking the "fragments of his blade" above him. He was now so weak that his endeavours to sit entirely down

seemed vain, and in one of his attempts to do so a gigantic apparition of a superhuman fist appeared like a portent above his head, between the slips. "*Preparati a morir!*" now thundered *Selinguerra*, and all seemed over with him, when suddenly the aspect of things was changed. In burst the "*terribil Gobbo*" himself, "in complete steel," and, striking the floor with a succession of bold knocks, and waving with convulsive jerks his sword, while he sidled dislocatedly along towards *Selinguerra* with little drifting hops, brought help at the most opportune moment. Well did he sustain in the ensuing conflict his terrible reputation. "Alone, alone he did it." At first it was *Selinguerra* and his lieutenant who opposed him, but he soon made minced meat of them; and then the whole army, spasmodically hopping and staggering in sideways to the rescue of their captain, attacked the *Gobbo* altogether. In the rage of the conflict, both he and the army madly swung the whole length of the stage, suspended in the air, smashing against each other right and left in the utmost confusion, and cutting each other promiscuously in their attempts to hit him, as if it were a "free fight" in Arkansas. But one by one, and platoon by platoon, they fell before the terrible *Gobbo*, until at last he hovered above the heaps of slain, sound as ever in wind and limb, and had a spasm of satisfaction over them as they lay there covering the stage, some of them with their legs straight up in the air. But a messenger now arrived. Where is the *Gobbo's* spouse? *Oh Dio!* and messenger and *Gobbo* drifted out together, bumping each other recklessly on the way, and disappeared between the slips.

It is useless further to follow the doings on this occasion. Suffice it to say that there was the "serpent-man," ending in a long green tail, and a terrible giant with a huge head and pock-marked face, each of which was a "*Deus ex machinâ,*" descending at opportune moments to assist one

or the other side,—the “*uomo serpente*” on one occasion crushing a warrior, who was engaged in an encounter with Ersilia, by flinging a great tower on him. What Belisario had to do with this “*grandiosa opera*,” besides giving it his name, I did not plainly see, as he never made his appearance on the stage. However, the audience seemed greatly delighted with the performance. They ate voraciously of *bruscolini* and cakes, partook largely of lemonade, and, when I left, the stage was strewn with *cornetti*, or paper horns, which they had emptied of their seeds.

The *Fantoccini* do not, however, confine themselves to the recitation of plays founded on incidents in romance and profane history—they also devote their powers to the representation of religious moralities, or mysteries, in which they “present” scenes from Scripture history. These “motions,” as Ben Jonson calls them, are, for the most part, performed by *Fantoccini*; but sometimes they are represented by living persons,—and there is a species of public plays, called *Giostre*, or *Maggi*, which are still performed by the peasants of some of the Tuscan towns. Giuseppe Tigri, in his preface to the “*Canti Popolari Toscani*,” says: “some of these I have myself seen, a few years ago, at Campiglio di Cereglio and at Gavinana. The best known, and those which are played nearly every year, are—the Story of Joseph, the Sacrifice of Abraham, the Passion of our Lord, which, in many respects, resemble the ancient mysteries. Besides these there are *Egisto de’ Greci*; *Bradamante and Ruggero*, taken from Ariosto; *Ircano, King of Thrace*; *Costantino and Buonafede*, or the Triumph of Friendship; the Conversion of St. Giovanni Bocca d’Oro; *Arbino and Micrene*, or the Persecution of the Christians by a Turkish King of Algeria; the Martyrdom of Sta. Filomena; the Empress Flavia; *Rosana*, the Beautiful Pagan who is Converted to Christianity; *Sant’ Alessio*; the Glorious Conquest of Jerusalem by the Christians; *Cleonte and Isabella and Stilla-*

core ; the Taking of Paris described by Ariosto ; and the Death of Louis XVI. Their theatre is in the open air, or in the chief piazza of the town, or under the shadow of the chestnut-trees in some wooded valley. On the day of the festival, after vespers, the people of the surrounding towns meet together and form a great circle of men and women. Before the play begins there is a messenger (called also an interpreter or page, as in the mysteries, dressed like an angel, with a flower in his hand), who, after the custom of the ancient Greek tragedies, sings a prologue, and salutes the audience, demanding their favour. The heroes of the drama then make their entrance, and with them comes the buffoon, who represents some one of the Italian masks—just as in the antique tragi-comedies they were present to temper with their jests the excess of horror or compassion among the spectators. The men play the women's parts, and are dressed in great mantles, or, as they call it '*all' eroica*,' and as much as possible in costume. Whenever the dress of the ancient Paladins is required, they have flags and old swords, and carry beautiful lances and halberds in their hands, with which they joust very skilfully, and which are (as I was told at Gavinana) of the period of Ferruccio. They weave together dialogues without divisions of acts, chanting them to a regular monotonous song in strophes of eights, repeating the first line of each, and moving from one part of the circle to another. The action is exceedingly simple, without intricacy or any attempt to keep the interest of the hearers in suspense, and the messenger informs them at first what is to be represented. Certain *ariettes* in sevens, interpolated into the drama, play the part of the chorus in the Greek tragedy, and are sung with the accompaniment of the violin. The character of this drama is always chaste and moral, and serves admirably to keep alive among the people who delight in them the old chivalric sentiment for the lady of one's love, and for every sacred and magnanimous enterprise."

During Easter I have also seen, at Santo Spirito, a mystery play performed by the scholars, and founded upon the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who would not bow down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar the king had set up. It was performed in the afternoon, within the hospital, and the Cardinal Tosti presided over it.

Ordinarily, however, these mysteries are performed by puppets, who are more dignified and less expensive than "*personaggi*." In England, the early plays of this kind were pageants performed in the church, in French or Latin. English, however, soon took the place of all foreign tongues, and they began to be played at the corners of the streets or in the public squares. They were generally, in the early days, exhibited on carts constructed for the purpose, with different floors; one for the *pater cælestis* and the angels, another for the saints, and a third for man. One corner of man's stage was called "hell's mouth," and here burnt a fire, up and down which demons came and went. An old account for repairs done to one of these pageants runs thus:—"Payd for mending hell mought ij^d.—Item, payd for keypyng of fyer at hell mothe iiij^d.—payd for sitting the world on fire v^d." In the time of Steele, miracle plays were performed by puppets under the arcade of Covent Garden; and Powell on one occasion promises his audience that his "Opera of Susannah, or Innocence Betrayed," will be exhibited next week, with a pair of new elders. In Germany these plays still continue to be performed in the cellars of Berlin; and a traveller has not long since described an entertainment of this kind at Lisbon, where, after the expulsion of Eve from Paradise, the Eternal Father came down in great wrath, called for Noah, and told him he was sorry to have created such a set of ungrateful scoundrels, and that he was resolved to drown them altogether. "Here Noah interceded for them, and at last it was agreed that he should build an ark, and he was ordered to go to the king's dock-

yard in Lisbon, and there he would see John Gonsalvez, for he preferred him to either the French or English builders. (This produced great applause.)” Ben Jonson, in his “Bartholomew Fair,” makes one of his puppet showmen say, “Oh! the motions that I, Lanthorn Leatherhead, have given light to in my time, since my master Pod died! Jerusalem was a stately thing, and so was Nineveh, and the City of Norwich; but the Gunpowder Plot, that was a get-penny.” And in “Every Man out of his Humour,” he speaks also of “a new motion of the City of Nineveh, with Jonas and the whale.”

In Italy the principal motions that are now played by the *Fantoccini* are passages from the life of Christ. One of these, the story of Judas Iscariot, I remember seeing several years ago in a little town on the main road to Naples. We had just left our *vettura* and were straying through the streets towards sundown, when a large booth attracted our attention, before which were coarse pictures representing scenes from the life of Judas, with placards underneath, announcing that the well-known and famous company of puppets, so greatly and deservedly admired throughout Italy, would this evening perform the grand Scriptural play of Judas Iscariot, for the small entrance fee of two *baiocchi*. At the door was a man in a thick black beard, who in stentorian tones was crying out to the people of the town to be quick, or they would lose the chance of seeing this justly celebrated, grand, and wonderful exhibition. Prompted by curiosity, we paid our *baiocchi* and went in. The representation had already begun, to an audience of about twenty persons of the lower classes; but the moment our party entered the performance was suspended, the curtain was dropped, and the padrone appeared, cleared for us the front seats, and announced that in consequence of the arrival of this most distinguished and cultivated company, which he had the honour of seeing before him, he should recommence the play from the very

first scene. So, in fact, he did ; and nothing more ludicrous and incorrect could easily be imagined. The kiss of Judas, when, after sliding along the stage, he suddenly turned with a sidelong jerk and rapped the other puppet's wooden head with his own, as well as the subsequent scene in which he goes out and hangs himself, beggar description. The audience, however, looked and listened with great gravity, seemed to be highly edified, and certainly showed no signs of seeing anything ludicrous in the performance; though their attention, I must confess, was at times somewhat divided between us and the puppets. When we arose to go, the manager again appeared, though the play was not quite over, and warmly thanked us for having honoured him with our presence.

At Siena, this year, there was a similar exhibition, to which the country people flocked from all the adjacent country, and which had such success that it was repeated every day for weeks. Sometimes, also, stories from the Old Testament are played, such as the Afflictions of Job ; the Sacrifice of Isaac ; the story of Susannah and the Elders ; and the Prodigal Son. A short time since, there was a representation of the Life of Samson, in which the puppet covered the stage with the bodies of the Philistines, literally according to the Scripture, "heaps upon heaps." But while making a long speech, preparatory to quenching his thirst from the jawbone of an ass, he unfortunately forgot that it was filled with water, and in his spasmodic gesticulations he sprinkled and spattered it recklessly over the stage and into the faces of the orchestra to such effect, that finally there was not a drop left when the time came to drink. To do him justice, however, he never lost his countenance or self-possession at this trying moment.

But of all the feats of the *Fantoccini*, nothing can be compared to their acting in the ballet. If the pantomime by actual "*personaggi*" be extraordinary, imagine what it is

when performed by puppets, whose every motion is effected by wires, who imitate the gestures of despair with hands that cannot shut, and, with a wooden gravity of countenance, throw their bodies into terrible contortions to make up for the lack of expression in the face. But, if possible, their dancing is even superior to their pantomime. When the wooden-headed court, almost as solemn and stiff as a real one, have seated themselves on one side of the stage, and the *corps de ballet* has advanced and retreated in steady platoons, and retired and opened just like the real thing—in, with a tremendous leap, suddenly drops the *prima ballerina*, knocks her wooden knees together, and jerking her head about, salutes the audience with a smile quite as artificial as we could see in the best trained of her fleshly rivals. Then with a masterly ease, after describing air circles with her toes far higher than her head, and poising herself in impossible positions, she bounds, or rather flies forward with super-human lightness, performs feats of choreography to awaken envy in Cerito and drive Ellsler to despair, and pausing on her pointed toe that disdains to touch the floor, turns never-ending *pirouettes* on nothing at all, till at last, throwing both her wooden hands forward, she suddenly comes to a stiff stop to receive your applause. This is the very apotheosis of ballet dancing. This is that perfection “which we are seeking all our lives to find.” Unhampered with the difficulties that encumber her mortal sister, she performs what the living creature can only attempt, and surpasses her as the ideal surpasses the actual. When we see her with her permanent smile, and breast that never pants, we are not haunted by the notion of those sad hours of practising in the gloomy theatrical day, when the splendid clouds of *tulle* and the stereotype smile give way to shabby petticoats and twitching face, and her ear is saluted by the criticism of the master instead of the applause of the audience. Ah, no! the *Fantoccina* leaps perfect into her art from the hands of her

maker, dreams her day away smiling just the same in her box as on the stage, is never harassed by want of food and family cares, disdains to eke out her insufficient salary by prostitution, is troubled by no jealousies, pricked by no vain ambition, haunted by no remorse, ruined by no failures, but without envy, sorrow, hunger, or the fear of old age, keeps a perennial youth and a perpetual smile. How much better to be a wooden *Fantoccina* than a living *Ballerina*! Better on all sides—not only for her, but for her *maestro*, who pays her nothing, hears from her no complaints, and is subject to no caprices. How miserable an apology, how wretched a mask Life seems beside Art! Who would not be a *Fantoccino*—a painted blockhead, if he could?

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